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WE ARE GLAD that the public is taking a keen if belated interest in the activities of the international armament ring during and between wars. The story of young men being killed with guns made by their fellow-countrymen and sold to the enemy at a profit to munitions makers has not grown less sordid with the years. It becomes peculiarly relevant to American young men, any one of whom faces the fantastic but real possibility of being killed in the Far East by a bit of shrapnel that was originally part of his mother's kitchen stove. We hope the Senate committee's investigation of the munitions racket will be thorough. Senator Nye, chairman of the committee, in a recent speech cited figures for various companies showing the difference between their profits in peace and in war. The Atlas Powder Company, according to Senator Nye, made $400,000 in peace and $2,300,000 in war; the General Motors Corporation, $6,000,000 in peace and $21,000,000 in war; the Hercules Powder Company, $1,000,000 in peace and $7,000,000 in war; the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, $7,000,000 in peace and $34,000,000 in war; the United States Steel Corporation, $105,000,000 in peace and $239,000,000 in war; the Bethlehem Steel Company, $6,000,000 in peace and $49,000,000 in war; the E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company, $6,000,000 in peace and $58,000,000 in war. Once the public realizes that between these two sets of figures lie the bones of countless dead young men, there can be no doubt that it will insist that the manufacture of munitions be taken out of private hands. This in itself will not remove the causes of war, but at least it will make it less of a paying proposition.

IN BERLIN are three Americans representing American firms which are helping Germany to build up the best air fleet in Europe. It is an open secret in foreign official quarters in Berlin that the Hitler regime has already ordered and in part received from British and American companies special parts for the making of 2,500 modern bombing and fighting planes. The companies supplying these parts are Pratt and Whitney, Curtiss-Wright, and Douglas Aircraft in the United States, and the firms of Vickers and of Armstrong, Sidley in England. What Germany obtains from France, Czecho-Slovakia, and Holland, and what she produces herself, we do not exactly know, but the 2,500 machines which can be definitely accounted for, because parts that cannot be turned out in Germany (quality steels, etc.) are being imported, probably make Germany superior in the air to France, Russia, England, or any other European Power. This has been achieved in less than a year. Most of these foreign airplane parts are being paid for by Germany in cash. There is plenty of money for such purposes. Indeed, Germany is in a hurry, and the American firms regularly receive stern cables from their client demanding speedy delivery. An armament exhibition on Unter den Linden displays the slogan "Germany's future lies in the air"; and Germany's rulers wish to step into that future at the earliest possible moment.

THE ATTITUDE of the United States government, prior to its firm note made public on April 30, on the question of Japan's "unofficial" pronouncement with respect to China seemed to be that if you don't touch it, it won't bite you. The American State Department was reported to be assuming an attitude of watchful waiting; President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull were described as planning to get around to the Far Eastern question as soon as they weren't so busy about other matters; and at least one newspaper dispatch was frank enough to say that the President and Mr. Hull "do not wish to strain relations by a protest which might do no good." However, in the absence of any formal diplomatic protest from this country, there was a good deal of scurrying back and forth of ambassadors both in Washington and in Tokio. And as a result the Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr. Hirota, issued his more temperate statement on April 25 in the form of identic notes to the American and the British ambassador at Tokio. Japan, according to Mr. Hirota, "had no intention of violating the independence or sovereignty of China"; "third Powers engaged in trade or other transactions for the benefit of China would be welcomed by Japan"; and Japan had every intention of abiding by existing treaty obligations. The statement made insistent reference to Japan's role as the "stabilizer" of Asia, responsible for the peace of the Far East and unwilling to stand by while some Western Power "exploited" China.

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ON APRIL 30 the State Department issued its warning to Japan. It was made clear that the United States would unequivocally insist on the observance of existing treaties and recognized no rights or obligations in China peculiar to Japan. The tone of this statement is in contrast to that of Sir John Simon, British Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, at the same time the American note was published, expressed the complete satisfaction of the British government with the Japanese incident as terminated by Mr. Hirota's tempering of the original Amau statement. It is particularly significant, however, that the more temperate announcement was made public neither in England nor in Japan. It would, of course, be fanciful to forget Mr. Amau's statement or to consider it not representative of the real aspirations of the Japanese government. In detail, particularly in those details which forbade the importation of arms in China, it may be that Japan is not yet ready to back up the Amau declaration. But that domination of China is considered by Japan to be its right and its destiny is perfectly plain from Japanese policy during the last twenty years. The time will inevitably come when the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty will be called upon —as China is endeavoring vainly to call upon them now—to back up their commitments, by force if necessary, or ignominiously hold their peace. Meanwhile China, having waited for a thousand years to be saved from chaos and confusion, can probably manage, with superb imperturbability, to hold out a while longer.

THE EMBATTLED FARMERS have spoken, and as a result the Agricultural Adjustment Administration has abruptly abandoned its attempts to control the production of milk. The shelving of the dairy program is a major set-back for the theories of Secretary Wallace, whose aides blame "distorted propaganda" for the plan's defeat. It is true that the opposition—manifest everywhere save in the Midlde West, which stood to benefit from the contemplated processing-tax subsidy—was concerted, with farmers, processors, distributors, and consumers alike protesting against what could mean only further cuts in consumption and higher retail prices. But what the statisticians of the AAA apparently cannot see, through their hurt feelings, is that there is plenty of basis for protest. The control plan included a 10 per cent cut in production on the ground of "overproduction." But there is no overproduction. Retail prices are simply too high to provide a full consumption. Milk is a perishable commodity, not like other farm products which can be stored and grow into surpluses. By the very nature of their product dairy farmers are at the mercy of the large distributors—and so is the consumer. The distributor, with giant corporations behind him, controls the price at both ends. What is obviously needed is control of distribution, not of production. The AAA should move at once toward control, or even further toward nationalization, of the whole dairy industry.

THE RAILWAY-WAGE CONTROVERSY has been settled, and the question of wage adjustments will not be reopened before May 1, 1935. The settlement was certainly the least minimum which the workers could have accepted with any feeling of success in the negotiations. It provides for gradual restoration of the 10 per cent cut in basic rates of pay instituted in 1932. Two and one-half per cent will be restored on July 1 of this year; 2½ per cent on January 1, 1935; the balance on April 1, 1935. Lest the public should feel that the railway workers are too fortunate under this settlement, a study of the general living conditions of 1,000 employees, made by the Department of Labor and eighteen railway unions, is worth consideration. Of 370 families that owned homes at the beginning of the depression, 44 had lost them, only 6 of whom received any cash in the transaction; 424 families had savings in 1929, of whom only 128 had retained even a part of their money; 464 families had dropped their insurance; 74 per cent had increased outstanding debts; 38 per cent reported contributions to relatives or friends. The average income of 38 per cent was less than $1,000; 65 per cent had earned less than $1,500. Only 18 per cent earned as much as $1,750. In other words, railway employees, formerly regarded as in the well-paid upper stratum of organized workers, are seen to be undergoing real suffering, even when they are still employed. It was reported that the railway managers agreed to the settlement outlined above because it was evident that the workers were determined to strike if they received less.

THE 2,300 STRIKING WORKERS of the Campbell Soup plant at Camden, New Jersey, had their case aired before the National Labor Board recently, against their inclination and at the wishes of a federal mediator. What happened to their representatives may explain why labor in general has lost faith in that august body and why the Campbell strikers are preparing for a "march" on Washington. The leaders of the strike were immediately put on the defensive at the hearing and their wage data disregarded for that of company officials. Then William Green, head of the American Federation of Labor and a member of the board, began badgering them. He could not understand, he said, why the strike was called at all. The strike leaders explained they were seeking recognition of their union—not an A. F. of L. affiliate—and higher wages. Was not their union in a majority at the plant? Mr. Green then inquired. The answer was yes. Then, Mr. Green asked triumphantly, why couldn't the workers have abided by the President's order giving representatives elected by a majority the right to speak for all employees? That was just the point, said the union leaders patiently; the company wouldn't allow it. Promised union-representation elections were delayed, there was a definite threat of reprisals, and unrest among the workers had grown. But the bewildered Mr. Green shook his head. He still couldn't see, he said, why the strike had been called. Meanwhile, in the same New Jersey town (118,000 population) 3,300 workers of the New York Shipbuilding Company ended their first month on strike with the hope that their difficulties would soon be solved by President Roosevelt himself. But the President is not interested in their strike from the labor point of view, the circumstances seem to indicate. What he cares about is the $43,000,000 worth of new naval vessels tied up at the shipyards. This is apparently the first strike on record in which the workers, if victorious, can say that they owe it all to Japan.

THE Alabama coal operators, secure in their wage differentials, will not secede from the Union. But the merchants of Harriman, Tennessee—some fifty of them at the latest count—have gone on strike against the NRA. In last

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week's issue *The Nation* recounted how General Johnson finally saw fit to remove the Blue Eagle of the Harriman Hosiery Mills. It was the first time that the National Labor Board had been able to subject a recalcitrant employer to discipline of this kind, and it was the first time that the NRA Compliance Division had handed out such punishment to a big business enterprise charged with violating Section 7-a. No sooner was the company deprived of its emblem, however, than the merchants of the town told General Johnson that they were voluntarily turning in their Blue Eagles, which they would not display again until the emblem was returned to the mill. Does this express the growing conviction among Southern business men that the New Deal must be fought to a standstill in so far as it interferes with the South's traditional privileges in dealing with wage-earners? If the NRA backs down on the removal of the Harriman company's Blue Eagle, Section 7-a might as well be removed from the Recovery Act for all the force it will have below Mason and Dixon's line.

CWA WORKERS, abandoned by the federal government on April 1, fell from the frying pan of the Civil Works Administration into the fire of local welfare departments—with their dangers from party and personal politics. Few localities throughout the country have funds to care for their new charges. They look to Washington for subsidies. Aid should be accompanied by a demand that they show a cleaner slate than New York City is able to do. At recent hearings of relief workers and unemployed before Welfare Commissioner Hodson, a pair of battered, useless shoes was left on the commissioner's desk to explain why a father could not comply with the truant officer's demand to send his thirteen-year-old daughter back to school. Two cases of children on home relief who had died of starvation were presented; and another case of a baby who died without medical care when the home-relief bureau doctor, called twice by the father, refused to attend. One delegate showed bruises received from the police whom a home-relief supervisor called in to disperse eighteen delegates who called at her office. This man was beaten and finger-printed for his attempt to see the supervisor whom the public is paying to take care of him and with whom he had an appointment. Following such a session it is no wonder that Mr. Hodson barred the press from the next hearing, saying that delegates would be heard in "executive session." Relief and unemployment have lately had scant notice in the papers, but there are limits to the silence which can be imposed even upon a press pledged to support the Blue Eagle and all its works. Taxpayers and readers even of conservative papers do not care to have relief bureaus run by police riot squads.

UNCERTAINTY as to the cause of the high prices for liquor since repeal has been dispelled by the report of the National Distillers' Products Corporation, one of the two dominant American liquor trusts, for the year 1933. During that twelvemonth National Distillers, exclusive of certain of its controlled subsidiaries, sold $15,483,000 worth of liquor. After all expenses were deducted, a net profit of $6,127,000 was realized. This represented a net profit of 39 per cent. Most of these earnings, naturally, were concentrated in the last three months of the year when the business was yielding the equivalent of an annual return of 49 per cent on its invested capital of $34,000,000. Schenley Distillers Corporation, the other dominant trust, ran a close second in the liquor-profit race. Coming in the first flush of repeal demand, these profits probably represent unusual pickings. But the widely heralded efforts of the Federal Alcohol Control Administration to reduce distillers' prices to a reasonable level have so far yielded few results. Early in January Joseph H. Choate, the Federal Administrator, announced that he would call for complete financial reports from the distillers to determine whether profiteering existed. A month later Mr. Choate again said that a general study of liquor prices was the next big job facing the FACA. Finally, late in February, after President Roosevelt had personally described liquor prices as too high, it was at last announced that the FACA had sent out questionnaires to all distillers in an effort to reduce the spread between manufacturers' prices and retail prices. Since then most of the modest reductions in price to the consumer which have occurred have resulted from price-cutting in the retail field, which alone is beginning to display some of the characteristics of competition. The distillers for the most part have contented themselves with complaints that bootleg liquor—at bargain prices—is depriving them of a large part of their "legitimate" market.

"THE ONLY THING that can save the hard-coal industry is a regulated equalization of labor." First the old-line United Mine Workers' union threatened strikes in Pennsylvania with that idea in mind. Then the newly formed Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania, an independent union, set it up as their battle cry. And now a fact-finding anthracite committee named by Secretary Perkins to study the 500 square miles of Pennsylvania's hard-coal region has reached the same conclusion. Of the million people in this area half are anthracite miners and their families, and all are dependent on the hard-coal industry for their livelihood. Homesteading is impossible as a solution because of adverse agricultural conditions. Either a large part of the population must be drawn off or the government must see that manufacturing industry moves to the hard-coal regions. The depression and the development of new fuels are the principal reasons for the slump in anthracite. Secretary Perkins's committee points out that it is the part of the federal government to step in, if anything is to be done. This has been the finding of other observers. Government control is the only thing that can save the industry.

TO FIGHT FIRE with fire may be good strategy on the prairies; it is hardly the method to employ in a large city. The anti-Nazi bill recently introduced in the New Jersey Legislature is a fire-fighting measure of a crude and dangerous sort. In order to put down Nazi propaganda the bill would imperil free speech altogether. It would make punishable as a misdemeanor "any statements tending to subject any group to prejudice, shame, hatred, ridicule, disgrace, or contempt by reason of race, color, or religion, creed, or manner of worship," together with statements tending to foment "domestic strife or to disturb domestic tranquillity." Is it not obvious that such a proscription would make it possible not only to put Father Coughlin in jail for his contemptuous remarks about Jews, but also to clap anti-Nazis into jail for unpleasant comment on the Germans, and radicals—and perhaps Republicans—for hostile statements about the

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government? A similar bill was introduced and defeated in the New York Legislature during the dying days of the session. Intolerance cannot be fought by intolerance; it can be successfully met only by the weight of opposing opinion—freely expressed.

WE had grown accustomed, in these latter chaotic days of the capitalist crisis, to keep a sense of proportion by reading the uncompromising pages of the *Daily Worker*. By combining it with the New York *Times* we achieved that state which is generally considered to be the most pleasing to the liberal mind—of being acquainted with the well-known two sides of every question. The way in which the two papers handled the death of Calvin Coolidge may be cited as an example of what we mean. The *Times* devoted several respectful and prominent pages to the life and times of Calvin. In the *Daily Worker* we found the news in a twenty-line story on an inside page under the single-column heading: "Enemy of Labor Dies." It was such things as these that made us regard the *Daily Worker* as a stone wall on the left against which the tides of capitalist sentimentality and compromise would roll in vain. But, alas, we have found a chink. In a recent issue we discovered an advertisement, believe it or not, of Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey's Circus. With the *Daily Worker* advertising capitalist circuses, where shall liberals and workers turn for the bread of revolution?

Gentile Silver

WE could wish that the disclosure that Father Coughlin's Radio League of the Little Flower is lined with silver futures, bought on narrow margin and calculated to yield a handsome profit, would discredit a man who is perhaps the most vicious single propagandist in the United States. But with a cunning extraordinary even for a demagogue, Father Coughlin and the treasurer of the league, Miss Amy Collins, issued statements which are masterpieces of the demagogue's art. Miss Collins first quoted an earlier statement by Father Coughlin: "While I raise my voice against gambling and speculation, the Radio League shall continue to be its own financial agent and invest this surplus league money safely in American commodities." Having thus exonerated Father Coughlin from any part in the silver trading, Miss Collins divulged that her investment in silver futures was nothing more or less than an act of faith in President Roosevelt:

> . . . believing implicitly in Mr. Roosevelt's oft-repeated statement [that he would raise the prices of American goods to the 1926 levels] I invested in the President's word in purchasing twenty contracts, or 500,000 ounces of silver, with an investment of $20,000. . . . I shall continue to do in the future what I have done in the past.

Father Coughlin attacked Henry Morgenthau as the spokesman of the "international gold bankers." They wanted, he said, to prevent any legislation "for the ultimate benefit of . . . one billion Orientals . . . who from time immemorial have identified their trade and commerce with Gentile silver, and especially for the benefit of the American people, who today are in bondage to the gold controllers."

Continuing his attack on the international bankers, Father Coughlin named a few names, all of them Jewish, and called them "Dillingers." Having planted an anti-Semitic seed in the fertile minds of his millions of followers, he carefully disavowed, in the next paragraph, any anti-Semitic prejudice by saying that the international bankers cared little for anyone, "be he poverty-stricken Jew or unsuspecting Gentile." A little farther on he denied having an ounce of silver "in my name or anyone else's"; he then proceeded to congratulate "the citizens of the United States who have invested in silver because they manifested their faith in President Roosevelt who . . . has stated that he would raise the price level of commodities to the 1926 standard"; and finally he called upon President Roosevelt to make good his promise (and, incidentally, safeguard the "investments" of the Radio League of the Little Flower).

Father Coughlin illustrates perfectly the way of the demagogue. It is only necessary to examine his statement to discover the intellectual limitations of its author. But it is this very intellectual weakness which makes the demagogue so dangerous. He is effective with the unthinking masses just because the cunning with which he appeals to every human prejudice and to every stock response is only half deliberate; the mental irresponsibility with which he deals in half-truths—that half of any truth which appeals most to the emotions—is only half conscious. When Father Coughlin calls for the remonetization of silver in the name of 10,000,000 unemployed, he is making exactly the sort of appeal that is made by a manufacturer of patent medicine when he offers horse liniment as a cure for cancer. Unfortunately, legislation cannot prevail against this brand of misleading propaganda. Counter propaganda is the only weapon available. Every intelligent organ of opinion in the country should be turned against the insidious influence of the Radio League of the Little Flower.

While Spain Starves

ALEJANDRO LERROUX, who considers himself the grand old man of the Spanish republic, will go down in history as one who traded that position for the premiership, and it will be hard for chroniclers to decide whether or no Niceto Alcalá Zamora, the first and present President, was a republican at all. Alcalá Zamora turned the Cabinet over to Lerroux when the Azaña-Socialist government was about to transfer the schools from church to state, institute some land reforms, do away with the state subsidy to the clergy, and enforce the expropriation of the Jesuit Order prescribed in the constitution. Alcalá Zamora dissolved the constituent Cortes which had voted these measures, and Lerroux supervised the election of a new assembly which would be sure not to carry them out.

Sure enough the elections returned a new Cortes that was more than half anti-republican. How this was done every Spaniard knows, and by whom, because the strongest bloc turned out to be the Catholic Acción Popular, the political arm of the Jesuit Order. The program of this party is a Catholic "totalitarian state" startlingly like the Dollfuss plan. When the new Cortes opened, however, the Acción Popular leader, José Maria Gil Robles, felt that the moment

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was not yet ripe to take power openly, or even to take a seat or two in the Cabinet. Therefore Alcalá Zamora was faced with the problem of appointing a republican Cabinet which could nevertheless count on a majority in the not very republican Cortes. An arrangement was made. Gil Robles declared himself unopposed to a republican form of government, and Lerroux promised to support the measures dear to the heart of Acción Popular—no church reform, no land reform, and pardon for the monarchist political prisoners who tried to overthrow the republic a year after it was proclaimed.

The new Cortes therefore returned the state subsidy to the clergy, delayed the transfer of schools and hospitals from church hands, and ignored land reform. At the same time the central government removed Socialist and Communist mayors, took the Labor Ministry from labor hands, and reinforced the national police. Wages plunged down and the price of bread—controlled by the wheat lords, whose representative, Santiago Alba, was made Speaker of the House—went up. Last week in a village in Estremadura some of the inhabitants were eating diseased mule and others grass. Throughout Spain, especially in Andalusia, the word "misery" acquires its full meaning. Furthermore, thousands of peasant and worker families have fathers, sons, husbands, and brothers in jail—political prisoners who, it is clearly understood, are not included in the amnesty just voted to monarchist rebels by a republican Cortes.

So President Alcalá Zamora has qualms. Gossip says he has been having them for some time. Political crises have generally found him on his knees praying for enlightenment, and according to some fantastic stories he paces the great empty palace corridors pursued by the reproachful shades of the still healthy royal family—or dreams that he does. Now two more shadows thicken his gloom. One is social revolution, which is held back only by the division and confusion in labor ranks. The other is fascism, which, as in all countries where revolution has been imminent, is protected and aided from within the government itself.

But Lerroux is blithe, apparently untroubled by the shade of the Lerroux who used to clamor: "Let us lift the veils of the nuns and make them madonnas"; and who used to say of himself that he was such a desperate man, so desperately opposed to church, monarchy, authority, tradition, power, and so forth, that it frightened him. Having once written—when he was a republican exile—that he was biding his time and still hoped some day to come to power, "which is what every Spaniard wants," Lerroux is satisfied. He has two phrases, the phrases which every Spanish premier has always repeated in times of extreme social anguish and danger: "We will maintain law and order. We intend to pacify the national spirit."

Meanwhile the qualms of Alcalá Zamora are symptoms of the immediate menace of a military coup, to be succeeded by a Primo de Rivera type of dictatorship, or a parliamentary coup, to be followed by what happened in Vienna, with widespread striking and revolt, and perhaps later a labor dictatorship, but most probably not. If revolution is crushed in Spain, the black horror of the Inquisition period will be alive again, and the weight of responsibility must fall not upon Lerroux or Alcalá Zamora but upon the Socialist leaders who marked time and upon the Communists who were unable and stupidly unwilling to head an honest, strong united labor front.

Unnatural History

IN the current number of *Natural History* one of the curators of the Trailside Museum on Bear Mountain reports with mingled delight and dismay some of the misinformation he has picked up while listening to the conversation of visitors at his institution. The story of the fabulous hook snake is solemnly repeated dozens of times every summer, together with so many other astonishing bits of unnatural history that the curator would be discouraged if it were not his business not to be and if he could not relieve his feelings by attaching one more label in the apparently hopeless effort to correct the misapprehensions of persons willing to be enlightened.

Doubtless he agrees with us in believing that there is no real necessity for everybody's being what Will Cuppy calls a "sparrow distinguisher," and that there is no reason why the average citizen with other things to do should scornfully dismiss the family cat in order to make way for a few of those African lions which, according to a recent book published by an English resident of South Africa, can easily be turned into the most gentle and affectionate of pets. Once when the early spring blossom of the bloodroot was pointed out to the infant daughter of a persistent nature lover, she replied with firm finality, "I call that a daisy," and thus announced with a decision whose clarity we cannot help admiring that she had no intention of cultivating the family weakness for fine distinctions among the fauna and flora.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that no one totally ignorant of natural history has any real right to call himself a modern. Broadly speaking, the philosophers from the time of the ancient Greeks to the end of the Renaissance took as their field the universe which began with man and extended upward to God. Still broadly speaking, thought since their time has tended, on the contrary, to begin with man and to continue downward to the amoeba. This fact, so the humanists imply, is responsible for the defects of our thinking, but be that as it may, no one who does not know something about the behavior of animals can really understand what the modern view of the universe is or how it came to be such. The difference between a person to whom a cockroach is merely a bug and one to whom it is *Blatta orientalis*, and thus a representative of one of the very oldest families of this earth, is the difference between one to whom man is a unique creature and one to whom he is merely the latest stage in nature's vast experiment with life.

Nor is it to be supposed that the student of such obscure creatures necessarily becomes the sentimentalist whom the general public usually thinks of when it thinks of the "nature lover." Fabre, who spent his life on the insects, was among other things a pious, even slightly bigoted Catholic. But the last paragraph of the last essay he wrote was concerned with some observations on the dreadful skill with which a certain parasite brought about the destruction of a certain caterpillar, and he tells us how a distinguished philosopher to whom he exhibited the process reacted to it. "At last he laid down the magnifying glass. Never in so lucid a fashion as here in my glass tube no bigger than your finger had he been able to watch the expert criminality of living creatures down to the smallest."

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What 20,000 Clergymen Think

PERHAPS the first response to the above title from some of our readers will be that they don't care a hoot in the hot place what 20,000 clergymen think. We would not ourselves want to exaggerate its importance, yet we should be at a loss to pick out any other sizable occupational group whose opinion would seem to us more representative or significant. Thus we feel indebted to Kirby Page of the *World Tomorrow* for organizing the questionnaire on war and on economic issues, the results of which are now made public.* The questionnaire was sent to 100,000 Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis, and the high proportion of one-fifth responded. Of the 20,000 nearly 14,000 say the church should not sanction or support any future war, and more than 18,000 declare themselves against "rugged individualism," or the capitalist system as it existed prior to the year 1929.

One advantage of such an inquiry among clergymen is that as a group they are unusually articulate. They have to a high degree reached definite conclusions on the issues presented and are at no loss to express them. Moreover, they are in a fairly independent position in regard to making their views known. Eighty-nine per cent of those who responded are willing to have their names attached to their answers on war and 87 per cent consent to be quoted on economic questions. It may be said also of ministers that each speaks for a considerable group whose thought and action he influences. As a class the clergy are probably more pacifist—at least in time of peace—than Americans in general, but in their economic views they are a highly representative occupational group.

It is gratifying to note that 82 per cent of the clergymen answering the questionnaire express themselves as against military training in public high schools and civilian colleges or universities, while only 12 per cent favor the practice. The others said they were in doubt or did not answer the question. In response to the query whether the churches should refuse to sanction any future war, 67 per cent of the votes are in the affirmative and 22 per cent in the negative. It is not so encouraging, though, to read the vote on the question which followed: "Do you regard the distinction between 'defensive' and 'aggressive' war as sufficiently valid to justify your sanctioning or participating in a future war of 'defense'?" To this inquiry 36 per cent answer yes to 42 per cent who say no. Some of the comments which accompanied the votes are illuminating. To the question whether it is his personal intention not to sanction or participate in any future war one clergyman replies with pleasing candor: "I can say yes glibly enough now, and say it truthfully, for I loathe everything that war means. . . . However, even a strong man would need additional grace to stick to such a resolution."

Turning to the economic front, 54 per cent of the votes are cast for national unions as opposed to company unions of workers. Only 12 per cent of the returns are for the alternative, but a larger proportion, 34 per cent, indicates the writers to be in doubt. "Rugged individualism," or capitalism as in the United States previous to 1929, is chosen by only 5 per cent as the system most consistent "with the ideals of Jesus and the noblest of the Hebrew prophets," while 88 per cent say they are for "a cooperative commonwealth in which the service motive is predominant in individual life and in all social arrangements." Evidently the lack of specifications in regard to the cooperative commonwealth accounts in large measure for the overwhelming vote in its favor. One clergyman says pointedly: "The wording of this dichotomy seems so obviously designed to answer itself that it is trivial. Which is better, the way things were before 1929, or the way things would be if all people cooperated like angels? My answer implies nothing."

The vagueness of this question is followed, however, by a demand for a more specific alignment, in which 51 per cent select "drastically reformed capitalism," 28 per cent socialism "as represented by the Socialist Party of America or by a new or more inclusive socialistic alignment in which the present Socialist Party would be included," 1 per cent fascism "as in Italy," and 1 per cent communism "as in Soviet Russia and as represented by the Communist Party of the United States." In regard to this inquiry one clergyman writes: "The questionnaire is unfair to communism. We need not limit it to Russia or the American Communist Party. It must be worked out with special consideration for the American scene." Another minister remarks that "only the blind, deaf, and dumb (oh, so very dumb) can want what we are now trying so hard to recover from."

In addition to Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis the questionnaire was sent to students in eight theological seminaries. We take it as significant and hopeful that the responses from this source are more emphatic in opposition to war and more radical in economic attitude than the average of returns from the clergy. Of 497 votes on the question whether the church should sanction a future war 415, or 84 per cent, are cast in the negative. Even nearer to unanimity is the ballot against "rugged individualism." Every one of 281 votes from the Yale Divinity School, Eden Theological Seminary, Boston University School of Theology, Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Chicago, and Andover-Newton Theological Seminary is against pre-1929 capitalism. There is one vote for it from Union Theological Seminary, one from the Evangelical Seminary, and two from the General Theological Seminary of New York—only four out of 497. Five of the ballots show the voters to be in doubt. This gives 98 per cent in favor of a "cooperative commonwealth." When it comes to more specific alignments, 53 per cent support socialism to 32 per cent for "drastically reformed capitalism." Two students from General and one from Union declare for fascism, while seven from Union, two each from Yale and Evangelical, and one from Eden come out for communism.

In so far as it represents the thought of clergymen, and their ideas in turn are representative of the American mind in general, the inquiry is an encouraging augury for the future.

*The report may be obtained postpaid for 25 cents a copy from Kirby Page, 3947 Forty-eighth Street, Long Island City, N. Y.

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Issues and Men

Masters of the World

THE *Atlantic Monthly's* publication of the suppressed and lost William Bayard Hale interview with the Kaiser in 1908 is another evidence of the excellent journalism of its editor, Ellery Sedgwick. But the interview itself reveals little that is new. A mass of indiscretions which the German Foreign Office was well justified in suppressing at any cost, it confirms what is generally known of the Kaiser's looseness of tongue and affirms especially the picture drawn of him by Prince von Bülow in his "Memoirs." There is, however, one passage in it—the concluding one—which will be read with profound satisfaction in Germany:

> "The future," the voice rang out, "the future belongs to the White Race, never fear!" His shoulders squared, his eye flashed, I could see the eagle above his head. "It belongs to the Anglo-Teuton, the man who came from northern Europe—where you to whom America belongs came from—the home of the German. It does not belong, the future, to the Yellow, nor to the Black, nor to the Olive-colored. It belongs to the Fair-skinned Man, and it belongs to Christianity and to Protestantism. We are the only people who can save it. There is no power in any other civilization or any other religion that can save humanity; and the future—belongs—to—us!"

There you have the Nordic doctrine as it was in 1908; it did not keep the Nordics, plus many Latins, from tearing each other to pieces for four years and giving those dreadful colored races a clear and shining example of the innate superiority and Christianity of the Fair-skinned Man.

The Kaiser's Nordicism has been improved upon by Hitler, who has more and more restricted the term Nordic to Germans or those of the "pure" Germanic stock, with the United States excluded because it is a mongrel nation. Hitler's attempted excision of the Jew from German life is to be followed by the elimination of the Slavic influence, not an easy task when one recalls those millions of Germans east and northeast of Berlin who are deeply infiltrated with Slavic blood. But the determination is there. Nor has the German belief in the superiority of German Kultur and in the superior mental processes, ability, and innate righteousness of the German people been really shattered by the disasters of the World War. The Jews, Communists, and pacifists were responsible, according to Hitler, for bringing these Nordic supermen to the dust. But not Jews, or Communists, or pacifists put Germany into the war and alienated the entire world. The Kaiser and his Nordic generals did that.

Curiously enough, the most outspoken challenge to the assertions of the Kaiser and of Hitler that the Germans hold the future of the world comes from the other great fascist camp. It must make Hitler writhe to read such words as those which Mussolini uttered on April 21: "No people in any part of the world present such a spectacle as the Italian people; disciplined, informed, tenacious in their efforts, they have reached the horizon of their greatness." How unworthy and ridiculous this is! There is hardly a drop of Nordic-Germanic blood in Italy—even if there are blue-eyed and blond Italians. How can Mussolini dare to assert, not only what we have just quoted, but that the sixty-year program of internal and external expansion he has just outlined will give Italy the "primacy of the world"? There's the challenge for you, Herr Adolf! Of course Brother Hitler will reply that Nordics don't have to wait sixty years; that they have already arrived. Has not Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the Hitler Minister of Propaganda, in speaking of the Nazis' "historical mission," recently said: "I am convinced that what we are doing today is pioneering work for the whole civilized world. . . . What we do today will in ten years be a model for the whole world?" Hear that, Mussolini!

The truth is that not these nations alone believe that they are God's anointed. I have already quoted from Lord Beaverbrook's incomparable speech at Putney, England, in which he said: "Why did God raise up the British Empire? Why did God raise up the Israelites? Why has God maintained the British Empire during the tempests and trials of centuries? Why has God made us the greatest, finest, and most powerful people in the world?" (Loud applause.) Similar national egoists are to be found everywhere. Are not Americans without number certain that we are God's chosen people? The French, despised Latins as they are, have no doubt of the superiority of their culture, their literature, their language, their art, and their ideals. And on the other side of the globe the yellow Japanese (who, the Kaiser said in this new-old interview, were "devils, that's the simple fact"; whose headship of Asia "would be the worst calamity that could threaten the world") believe that they are by divine right the rulers of Asia, chosen as sacred instruments to teach the nasty-smelling Western pale-skins their place.

Fortunately, humanity may take heart in recalling that similar manias have had their day in the world and have passed out. In the current *American Mercury* S. Miles Bouton quotes Adam Müller, the romanticist, as writing this in 1809: "The great federation of European Powers shall come some day, and will fly the German colors, for all that is great, fundamental, and eternal in every European institution is German." The day of Müller has long since gone and no European federation, unless it is enslaved, will fly the German flag. Mr. Bouton concludes his article thus:

> The Nazi leaders declare that their Third Reich will endure "forever." If history has any meaning, and if all human experience is not a lie, they are mistaken by a good many millennia. The end will come sooner than horrified civilization, deceived by the "election" of November 12 and unaware of the hidden currents in Germany, as yet dares to hope. The only thing uncertain is whether the end will come through revolution or through war. If it be war, that will also be the end of Germany.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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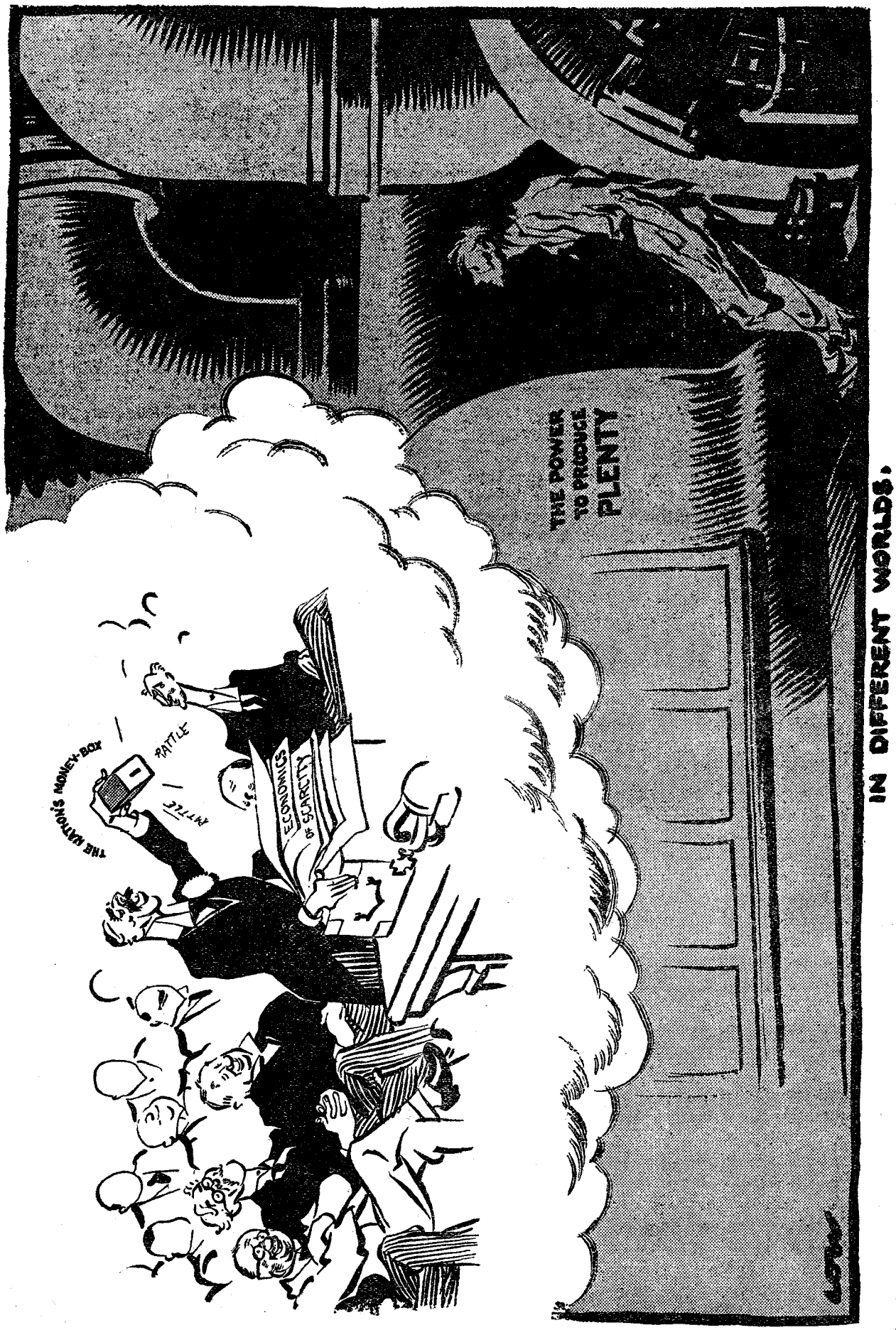

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Stalin Buries Revolution—Prematurely

By ELLIOT E. COHEN

LOUIS FISCHER'S article in last week's *Nation* contains the most important news that has come out of Russia since 1917. The reports of this correspondent, widely recognized as uniquely informed and friendly to Soviet Russia, are always revealing. The present dispatch must be read, read again, and reread. It will reward the effort. There has been no such roll of working-class death, defection, and doom since the dark days of 1914, when the World War crashed down upon the Second International and the whole organized European working class.

Leon Trotzky is officially dead—this is Fischer's first Moscow news.

Who is Trotzky? There seems to be a difference of opinion. To the masses of the world he is, next to Lenin, the great leader of the Russian Revolution. To capitalist leaders, if printed opinion and drastic measures to insulate him from the workers mean anything, he is a revolutionary incendiary of the highest voltage. Nevertheless, to the official Communist leadership he is the betrayer of Lenin, history's most scoundrelly counter-revolutionary, denounced for a decade, his ruthless extermination demanded.

Now, reports Fischer, Trotzky is dead. The criminal, then, has at last been struck down for his crimes? No, Fischer has a quite different story to tell. In the first place, Fischer insists, Trotzky is no criminal. On the contrary, he is a political mind unmatched in our times, and a leader and statesman of first rank. The accusation that Trotzky is a "counter-revolutionary in the pay of the capitalists" is branded as "an infamous implication . . . beneath contempt." Yet, Fischer says, Trotzky has been "condemned" to waste his best years in exile from the Soviet Union, "which he helped make what it is today."

How explain that? What condemned him to exile? "Cruel circumstances" is Fischer's first answer, curiously abstract. But as his story continues, more concrete explanations emerge. They are: (1) Stalin rewrote "Soviet history so that Trotzky's role either disappears or becomes besmirched." (2) Propaganda excited hate against him "not only in the party and youth but among the general population [that is, workers] which once revered him." (3) His supporters were exiled; underwent years of "well-nigh intolerable physical, mental, and moral suffering." (4) Some, threatened or broken by exile, deserted him. Even Lenin's widow, "a former Trotzkyist," the indomitable Bolshevik, Krupskaya, found it advisable to falsify her reminiscences! Now Rakovsky, Trotzky's best-known Russian colleague, has "recanted." (5) For Trotzky himself "personal vengeance" made mercy or reprieve impossible. "Those whose words count are too committed to anti-Trotzkyism."

A false indictment; systematic perjury; terrorized defense; implacable judges; no appeal. Then it was not "cruel circumstances" at all? Trotzky was an honest revolutionary, victimized by tyranny and revenge? Fischer reproaches us for our naivete. "Moral indignation gets us nowhere." Let's be realistic; let's face the "facts." Admitted, they framed him, exiled him, assassinated his reputation. But, believe it or not, his death was from natural causes. Betrayed by error, he misjudged "events." "Events" slew him.

What was Trotzky's fatal error? Here, in Fischer's clearest words, are the fundamental mistakes of "Trotzkyism": (1) "Trotzky advocated industrialization on a vast scale, but he did not suppose that socialism could thus be attained." (He did not believe in "socialism in one country.") (2) "He put his trust in world revolution."

"He put his trust in world revolution." This is Trotzky's heresy. What Young Pioneer schoolboy does not know enough to be astounded by this, to be provoked into breaking in excitedly, "Look here, those words which you say are the false motto of Trotzky, aren't they the very same words inscribed on the banner of Len—?"

But Fischer is quick. "I trust no one will . . . quote Lenin to refute me, or to prove that the master did not conceive of socialism in one country, that he believed the . . . Soviet Revolution could not succeed without foreign insurrection." Lenin changed his mind several times, said "the one thing and the other." But nowhere does Fischer make a categorical statement. This is his most positive argument: "There is reason to assume [evidence?] that toward the end of his life . . . he inclined to Stalin's present view that socialism could be established in the Soviet Union." So it is Stalin's view, not Lenin's? But enough, Fischer interrupts, *"If he did not, it would not make any difference."* (Whose steel-and-granite verdict on Lenin is this?)

And why wouldn't it make any difference? "Lenin was a genius, but not a prophet." Lenin believed in world revolution. But he and Trotzky failed in Hungary and Bavaria. Moreover, says Fischer, Lenin's policy of world revolution has failed, since his death, in China, Japan, Germany, Spain. And now fascism spreads invincible from country to country. Even the very Comintern itself, Lenin's Third International, is, Fischer announces, a "dismal failure."

Note: Lenin died in 1924. Trotzky has been in exile since 1927. From 1923 on the Comintern, whose task was revolution, was under the complete control of the Stalinist leadership, which put no trust in revolution. Yet, reasons Fischer, when reaction wins, it is *Lenin,* and *Lenin's* policy, that "events" have proved wrong.

And now, concludes Fischer, only the "firm ground" of the Soviet Union remains. The world hopelessly moves toward blackest reaction. Lenin's hopes were false. "Life washes the world revolution" away.

Thus a second, earth-shaking death is announced—the death of world revolution. And with that announcement a third death is revealed in this obituary of "Trotzkyism"—the official death in Moscow of Leninism!

Fact mountain-high confirms Fischer's news of Moscow's repudiation of Leninism. The task of the Comintern, of which the Russian party is theoretically only a subordinate section, is to lead the world proletariat toward world socialism. This victorious advance Lenin, like his master,

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Marx, never visualized except as a single, highly complex, step-by-step, generations-long, world-wide struggle, with many *interdependent, coordinated* phases. The Third Communist International was no loose entente of rival allies, each fighting in its national sector, but one army fighting on an international battlefront with one banner—international revolution. How else build the world socialist society in an era when capitalism, economically and politically, operates internationally?

To Lenin and Marx, Fischer's dispatch could have only one meaning: the general staff of the Comintern has succumbed to nationalism and defeatism, has deserted. Every act of Stalin's policy is proof. Interested only in "upbuilding" and defending Russia, everywhere the Stalinist leadership relies exclusively on diplomatic pacts and agreements, while capitulating on the class-struggle front. In Germany it concentrated on Foreign Office negotiations, while neglecting the organization of a united-front workers' struggle against fascism, which would have checkmated Hitler and might have culminated in a successful revolutionary offensive.

In the United States Russia won diplomatic recognition but compromised militant working-class activities in the United States, its possessions and dependencies. (Section 4 of the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement; the dissociation of the Trade Union Unity League from its parent body, the Red International Trade Unions; the order to the Cuban party to oppose "confiscation of American property"; the disappearance of the American section from the E. C. C. I., 13th Plenum Resolution.)

The biennial congress of the Communist International has not been convened by Moscow for five years. Instead, from the victorious workers' fatherland Stalin thus addresses the Russian people, and indirectly the great imperialist Powers—with the world proletariat listening through the window:

> Of course, we are *far from being enthusiastic* about the fascist regime in Germany. But *fascism is not the issue* here, if only for the reason that fascism, for example in Italy, did not prevent the U. S. S. R. establishing very *good relations* with that country. . . . If the interests of the U. S. S. R. demand rapprochement with this or that country which is not interested in *disturbing the peace* [preserving the status quo] we shall take this step *without hesitation*. . . . Our orientation is toward the U. S. S. R. and *toward the U. S. S. R. alone*. [Italics mine.]—Report of the Seventeenth Congress of the C. P. U. S. S. R., 1934.

As for the laboring masses of the world, bowed down by capitalist super-exploitation, menaced by fascism and war, Moscow sends them Comintern manifestos, proclaiming tremendous new proletarian victories all over the globe, calling upon them to defend the Soviet Union, promising imminent world revolution. This is the worst. The Kremlin deserts the struggle for international revolution, but does not relinquish the banner. It does not loose its iron control over the Communist organizations of the world. They can still be used. Through them, under the cry of "Defend the Soviet Union," support, mostly "liberal" (small bourgeois), can be rallied for Russian national policy; rival working-class leaders and organizations can be fought, who might grow strong through struggle and finally challenge the Kremlin's unexercised franchise of revolutionary proletarian leadership.

Throughout the world the Third International has degenerated from mere impotence against capitalism to sabotage of united working-class action. Inevitably it has ended by disrupting itself. Everywhere, according to statistics and reliable report, Communist organizations are disintegrating.

Is world revolution, then, dead? If desertion and defeat and demoralization could kill, revolution would now be dead. It is perilously sick. Hitler smashed the retreat of the international working class into a disorderly rout. But revolution is a hardy plant.

Let us look out over the earth of 1934. Never was oil more favorable for revolution. After years of depression capitalism shows no substantial signs of recovery. Indeed, its decay and inner disintegration grow increasingly evident. Marx's words influence political discussion and struggle the world over. Revolutionaries tempered by years of experience are found in every major city in the world.

Now the great masses begin to stir again. Their life is intolerable, defeat has taught them lessons, their political awareness has reached a new level. But their action is wavering, confused. They have lost confidence in both the Second and Third Internationals. In workers' eyes, opened by the German and Austrian events, both are hopelessly bankrupt. The world proletariat demands new leadership. And new leadership begins to emerge. Two tendencies crystallize, from different sources but in the same left direction. The first is chiefly Socialist in origin, in revolt from the policies of the Second International toward revolutionary Marxism. No country is without such factions, segments, parties, small or large, developed or undeveloped, confused or clear.

The second tendency, Communist in origin, is the outgrowth of the Left Opposition of the Third International, the so-called "Trotzkyists." Left Opposition "factions," organized to fight the "national-socialist" tendencies of Stalin's policy, existed in a number of countries while Trotzky was still in Siberian exile; by 1933 there were groups in twenty-two countries, each with its own press. In August, 1933, convinced by the German events of the irretrievable degeneration of the Comintern, the Left Opposition broke with "oppositionalism," declared its independence of official communism, reorganized as the International Communist League on a strict Marxist-Leninist platform, and called for a new party and the Fourth International. Its growth since has been steady, especially in France, Holland, Spain, and the United States.

In its work the effort of the International Communist League is toward a militant, well-balanced Leninist program, integrating past experience, present needs, and future possibility. The strategy is toward revolution. The tactic is to organize the struggle of the workers for the demands of the hour. Today the workers' imperative demand, as the I. C. L. sees it, is for working-class united action. This theme permeates its program. It has not set itself up as the new party or the new international. On the contrary, declaring itself only a single force, the I. C. L. offers to merge with all other forces that will agree on a revolutionary Marxist program in a new jointly organized union: this, only this, to constitute the new party and the Fourth International. In this spirit it has everywhere approached the revolutionary left-Socialist tendency. In several countries, including the United States, representatives of the two tendencies meet and engage in formal discussion. Significantly,

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even as they unrelentingly discuss programmatic differences —for the I. C. L. will not yield an inch on basic Leninist principles—their organizations work together. This the I. C. L. insists upon, as Trotzky has done for years, in the name of the burning necessity of organizational united fronts on a specific agreed struggle against economic and political oppression, the threat of war, and fascism. On the whole international scene the I. C. L. is a catalyst of a workers' united front. In Spain Andres Nin, I. C. L. leader, is credited with laying the foundations of the growing country-wide revolutionary united front between Communist and Socialist locals. Trotzky is being driven out of France, says the Associated Press, for organizing a united front against reaction.

The reaction of official communism to this new revolutionary ferment, to the world-wide workers' demand for a united front, measures its loss of all working-class responsibility. Its response to the awakening militancy of American Socialist workers, inspired by the heroism of their Austrian comrades, was to disrupt the Madison Square Garden meeting—a hooligan act repeated elsewhere in the United States and Europe. Its answer to the united-front movement in Europe is to excommunicate it as a counter-revolutionary police conspiracy against the international revolutionary plans of the Comintern (we have seen what these revolutionary plans are) and toward imperialist intervention in the Soviet Union.

During the past few weeks, with Trotzky under the close surveillance of the Paris police, the official "Communists" have revived the old accusation that Trotzky hates the Soviet Union, is organizer and advance agent of a counter-revolutionary capitalist invasion of the workers' fatherland. Fischer's article carries this charge in "liberal" form. "The Trotzkyists," says Fischer, "reject the Soviet Union."

Leon Trotzky not defend the Soviet Union? Trotzky will go down in history as the Soviet Union's greatest defender. Trotzky was head of the Moscow Military Revolutionary Committee that safeguarded the birth of the workers' state, he created and led the Red Army that drove back the White Guard imperialist counter-revolution, and throughout his exile he has never ceased to write and fight and organize to defend the Soviet Union. But to Trotzky the defense of the Soviet Union means backing necessary diplomatic pacts and treaties by the Leninist defense of a great wall of workers' organizations in united front, standing invulnerable between imperialist intervention and the workers' state. To say that Trotzkyism rejects the Soviet Union is a slanderous lie.

Last week Leon Trotzky came alive again in the press of the whole world and in the minds of the great world masses. His enemies—capitalists and Stalinists alike—had pronounced him safely dead. Now they try to bury him, and "Trotzkyism" (international communism), again. All the mud and filth come streaming out again. We know what the capitalist interest is. As for official communism, "Our only interest in Trotzky," blandly remarks Earl Browder, general secretary of the C. P. U. S. A., to the New York *Post* reporter, with Trotzky menaced by French fascist assassins, "is to isolate him from the workers." What capitalism cannot kill bureaucratic slander cannot bury. International communism lives and grows.

The Marxist revolutionaries are few and the obstacles facing them stupendous. But what odds would those sound Britishers, Lloyds, have quoted on Lenin and his tinier band in 1914?

Order on the Air

By JAMES RORTY

APPARENTLY nothing will be done about the unification of communications services at this session of Congress and, especially, nothing about radio broadcasting. In January President Roosevelt received the mumbling, evasive, and futile report of Secretary Roper's interdepartmental committee. A month later the President recommended ". . . that the Congress create a new agency to be known as the Federal Communications Commission, such agency to be vested with the authority now lying in the Federal Radio Commission and with such authority over communications as now lies with the Interstate Commerce Commission—the services affected to be all those which rely on wires, cables, or radio as a medium of transmission." Forthwith Senator Dill introduced a bill in the Senate and Representative Rayburn introduced one in the House. Both bills provide for the desired unification. Neither bill does anything serious or intelligent about broadcasting; neither bill is scheduled to pass at this session.

That is just as well. To call for order—or even orderly conflict—on the air would be to summon to Washington a swarm of lobbyists as large and even more furious than the locust horde that laid waste the late lamented Tugwell bill. And unless this call, when the President issues it in earnest, is backed by a competent study and comprehensive recommendations by an expert, non-political investigating committee, nothing of importance will be accomplished.

In its essence the charge leveled against the "American system" of advertising-subsidized radio broadcasting is that it is drunk and disorderly. On this general charge, the commercial broadcasters, the radio engineers, the educators, the radio lawyers, radical and reactionary pressure groups, and even the officials of the Federal Radio Commission are in substantial agreement. It is apparent that the initial chaos, which in the fulness of time gave birth to Rudy Vallée's "Connecticut Yankees," is still a chaos from any point of view—technical, economic, political, legal, or cultural.

First and foremost among the problems that an honest, non-political investigating body would have to consider is that of censorship. For all practical purposes radio in America is owned by big business, administered by big business, and censored by big business. Both the ownership and the censorship are, of course, more or less concealed under a series of complex disguises. As Walton Hamilton has said: "Business succeeds rather better than the state in imposing restraints upon individuals, because its imperatives are disguised as choices."

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The directors of NBC and Columbia, the two great broadcasting chains, lose no opportunity of propounding their official theory of these "choices," and of concealing the underlying imperatives. The theory is that you, as an individual member of the great radio audience, can fashion radio nearer to your heart's desire merely by writing a letter to your favorite station telling the director what you do and do not like. Within reason, of course. Here are some of the more important things that cannot be said on the air, under the present radio set-up in this country:

1. Any attacks by Communists or other radical minorities upon our form of government or upon the specific acts of the Administration in power. A certain amount of liberal criticism is permitted, as, for example, on the sustaining programs sponsored by the National Council on Education by Radio. Some exception should also be made for speeches, on purchased time, by radical candidates for political office. But radical minority parties rarely have adequate funds for such purposes.

2. Any criticism of advertisers or of the advertising business in general.

3. Any radical criticism of the power and utility interests, which directly or indirectly dominate the broadcasting industry.

4. Any direct espousal of the cause of a militant labor group involved in a strike or other struggle for power.

5. Any advocacy or even any mention of birth control, especially of the role of the Catholic church in opposing birth control. (Exception should be made for a few stations of negligible audience.)

6. In general, anything that might be construed as "obscene" or even as "tactless" or "controversial" by the alert young Pecksniffs who guard the portals of the air in behalf of the owners and directors of the major broadcasting stations.

These censorships are exercised, first, by the Federal Radio Commission, second by the States, third by the radio stations themselves, either through the application of established rules or through the discretionary whimsy of the control operator.

The Radio Commission is prohibited by law from censoring the material broadcast by stations. But it is obliged by law to grant or withhold licenses as may seem desirable in order to serve the "public interest, convenience, or necessity." Indirect censorship is therefore implicit in the commission's powers and duties until these powers and duties are more explicitly defined by law.

A radio station is also prohibited by law from censoring speeches made by qualified candidates for public office, and a station is lawfully obligated to permit opposing candidates to speak if it permits any at all. However, it may refuse to sell any time at all to candidates, and it is not prohibited from censoring other political speeches or non-political speeches. Also, it may be remarked, this freedom to buy time on the air, permitted equally to all candidates, works out much like the "freedom" of the individual worker not to work. What it comes down to is that financially powerful groups have an even greater advantage on the air than in using other instruments of social communication.

The Federal Radio Commission has power to apply the criteria of "public convenience, interest, or necessity" to the granting, renewal, or withdrawal of licenses. In the exercise of this power the commission may use petty violations of law or commission regulations as a pretext for what is in effect censorship, while the power to pass on the program service of a station is definitely the power to censor such programs. Since the limited number of channels available for broadcasting have been allotted, almost the only way an applicant can obtain a license is by challenging the usefulness to the public of an existing station. Once challenged, the burden of proof—and it is an expensive burden—is placed on the existing station, and because of the vagueness of the criteria of "public convenience, interest, or necessity" sheer opinion is inevitably a major factor in the decision. What sort of program is in the public interest? What sort is not? To what extent is criticism of the government in the public interest? To what extent is commercial advertising in the public interest? Is political controversy in the public interest? Is public discussion of birth-control laws in the public interest?

A decision against a challenged station not only censures its past programs, but also influences the programs of other existing stations. Even when the decision is not against the challenged station or the station applying for renewal, a hard fight to obtain a favorable decision may make other stations more wary. Space is lacking for detailed citation of cases, but the high mortality of educational stations in recent years is significant. Their number was reduced from ninety-four in May, 1927, to forty-nine in January, 1934. Some of these casualties have been caused by the inability of slimly financed stations to spend money for the defense of their licenses before the commission or for court appeal when challenged by competing commercial stations. Others were caused by the commission's policy of demanding that every station be "all things to all men"; the policy, in other words, that there is no room on the air for a station representing a special group or a special interest. This principle was applied in the case of WCFL, Chicago Federation of Labor station, when the station was denied an extension of its facilities, the decision being affirmed by the Court of Appeals.

The case of Station KGEF and the Reverend "Bob" Schuler, the fighting fundamentalist of Los Angeles, is particularly interesting. The station was owned by Schuler's church and sold no time to advertisers, being supported by voluntary donations from members of the church. Several other churches and institutions, including the Los Angeles Pacific College, the John Brown schools, and the Southern Conservatory of Music, used this station. It might appear that here was a station operating solely in the public interest, without benefit of advertising. But Schuler's interpretation of the public interest included virulent attacks upon local politicians and upon the Catholic church. His application for renewal of license was contested and the license was withdrawn, the commission overruling in this case the report of its examiner. Successive court appeals, in which the American Civil Liberties Union participated, proved futile.

State libel and slander laws are another element in radio censorship. At least one decision, sustained by the Supreme Court of Nebraska, has held that a station may be held responsible for defamatory statements uttered by a person broadcasting an address over station facilities. After this decision most stations became increasingly cautious, required advance submission of talks, and provided the control operator with a list of "don'ts" for his guidance.

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As a mere matter of commercial prudence, radio stations must exercise considerable censorship over their programs. If they did not they would quickly find themselves in trouble with the commission, with State governments, with their public, and with their advertisers. However, this situation is made a pretext for arbitrary censorship of matter affecting adversely the interests of the station, its advertisers, and the major power and public-utility interests, with which broadcasting is tied up.

The extraordinary lobby against the Tugwell food and drug bill is perhaps the best example of this. Radio stations, many of which derive an important share of their income from proprietary-medicine, drug, and food advertisers, received urgent letters from some of these advertisers demanding, on pain of cancelation of advertising contracts, that they do their bit to beat the bill, which was an Administration measure. Many of them obeyed, especially the smaller ones, though the major chains, aware of the political spotlight focused on them and of the insecure nature of their vested interests in the air, were more cautious.

An amusing example of internal station censorship is the experience of Dr. William K. Gregory of the American Museum of Natural History, a section of whose address on "Evolution and the Depression" was blotted off the air by the control operator when he became alarmed by the following passage: "We have reckless overproduction of goods and reckless overproduction of people. We are a beehive choked with honey, yet full of striving bees." Station WABC apologized for this censorship before Dr. Gregory had time to protest.

Concerning present studio practice in the matter of censorship, the magazine *Variety* has this to say:

> Censorship in radio now more or less runs itself. The policy, somewhat along the lines of an honor system, makes a censor of everybody in the studio from actors to control-room engineers. Nobody has been taught what to avoid or bar, and the material-washing is left to personal discretion.

Advertisers hold the whip hand, of course. The meat packers protested when the United States Public Health Service advised people to eat less meat in summer. Promptly the Secretary of the Treasury took over censorship of such broadcasts. And shortly thereafter the Department of Agriculture issued some hot-weather suggestions on the utilization of lower-priced cuts of meat.

The technical problem of bringing order on the air would probably mean using cleared channels only, and fewer of them; it would mean using more wax records, which are now indistinguishable from original studio broadcasts; it would mean dislodging or buying off the existing quasi-vested interests; it would effect huge operating economies.

As for support, H. O. Davis of the Ventura *Free Press* estimates that $50,000,000 would cover the total annual expense for the production and transmission of all programs, even under our present chaotic and wasteful system. The radio listener pays six times that annually for power, new tubes, repairs, and replacements of his receiving set. A small tube or set tax would easily finance the cost of a socialized system.

Recently a committee of the American Civil Liberties Union, consisting of Henry J. Eckstein, Morris L. Ernst, Norman Thomas, Levering Tuson, and Bethuel Webster, Jr., rendered a report recommending a federal investigation of radio broadcasting, from which the following passage is quoted:

> . . . the President should obtain authority from Congress to establish a small non-political commission to investigate the whole problem of radio broadcasting and to make recommendations to the President for legislative and administrative changes necessary to insure the maximum beneficial use of broadcasting facilities. Only through studies by such a commission can all interests find an orderly means of studying their claims and having them fairly appraised. . . . No agency of the federal government is equipped to undertake such a job.

With over a decade of broadcasting chaos behind us, and with the successes and failures of England, Canada, and the Continent to learn from, we should by this time be able to achieve some measure of order—or at least orderly conflict—on the air. And this, surely, is the way to go about it. In view of the complexity of the problem the detailed findings of such an inquiry cannot be predicted or prejudged. But perhaps some résumé of the objectives to be sought is both possible and desirable.

In general, it may be said that the ether has become a great mirror in which the social, political, and cultural struggles of modern man are reflected and grotesquely magnified. What is reflected back from the ether over Germany is Hitlerism, Nordicism, anti-Semitism, militarism. Hitler uses the radio to manufacture Nazis, just as Mussolini uses the radio to manufacture his brand of neo-Roman Fascists. In Russia Stalin uses the radio to manufacture Stalinists, although it may well be claimed that as a result of the wiping out of private vested interests we find in Russia the nearest approximation to a genuinely creative and cultural use of the instrument. Obviously no ideal solution is possible, for the simple reason that radio is an approximately ideal medium only with respect to the governmental and cultural advancement of an ideal, collectivized, classless, warless, planetary human society.

For America the issue, broadly stated, is whether or not a more or less mythical political democracy, holding the bag of an obsolete, unplanned, traditionally exploiting capitalist economy, can pull radio out of that bag and make it function in the interest of human progress and civilization. In a period of accelerating technological, economic, and social change a political democracy is a state of conflict almost by definition. The task of statesmanship is to make that conflict creative rather than destructive. Any program of creative statesmanship in the modern era must take account of radio broadcasting as a major instrument of social communication. Every vested economic interest, every established or aspiring group expressing class, racial, religious, or other interests, will struggle to use radio and if possible to control and manipulate it as an instrument of propaganda, that is, as an instrument of rule.

During this transition period it would seem that the general interest can best be served by a rehabilitation of democracy on the air, with all its significant conflicts represented. This would be achieved, although only approximately, by a system which prevented the capture and exclusive use of the medium by any of these competing interests, but permitted the free and adequate use of radio by any and all groups that could legitimately claim to represent the basic rights, needs, and functions of society.

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More concretely, the choice is roughly between some form of government ownership and operation, with a partial or total elimination of advertising and support by advertisers, and a "rationalization" of the present American system of privately owned and operated stations, with heavy participation of government in both ownership and control. In either case the major results to be desired are the following:

1. Total or partial elimination of advertising sales talks. The drive for government grading of staple products and for control of food, drug, and cosmetic advertising will continue, in spite of the defeat of the Tugwell bill and the hamstringing of the consumers' representatives at Washington. Muffling the radio advertiser and breaking the advertiser's economic whip over radio are parts of that battle.

2. The technical and economic rationalization of the system through a new body of law and adequate administrative machinery.

3. The freeing of the air from its present control by power and public-utility interests.

4. The more effective utilization of radio by educators, as well as by writers, critics, artists, architects, physicians, scientists, and health workers, including workers in the field of birth control.

5. The protection and service of the interests of minority groups in the whole field of political, economic, and social education, propaganda, and agitation.

It is a large order, and a basically important order. By our success or failure in filling it we shall be able to judge whether or not democratic political government has collapsed in this country.

France Is Still a Republic

By DONALD BARRETT

Paris, April 5

REPRESENTATIVES of 4,000,000 French war veterans have met in annual conclave and dispersed—and they are not going fascist, nor is France. Quite the contrary. In fact, the ex-soldiers have just dealt French fascism what may well prove to be its deathblow. The fascist reactionaries of February 6 had a well-laid plan to capture the veterans' convention and drag the great mass of former soldiers into their camp, to provide the numbers which they have so far lacked. On the eve of the convention fascist sentiment in Paris ran high. Marshal Lyautey openly attended mass-meetings of the Young Patriots, Deputy Taittinger's fascist gang which was mowed down near the Pont de la Concorde on February 6. And he was not by any means the only high army figure involved. Taittinger himself boasted that the veterans' congress was to be the zero hour. But the fascists failed to go over the top.

The war veterans, without warning and against the expectations of all the political wiseacres, suddenly turned to the left and voted a program so radical, so anti-fascist, so devastatingly critical of the present order of things, that Léon Blum and Paul Faure, the Socialist leaders, hastened to hail it in the *Populaire* as their own, rejoicing that the supposedly conservative former soldiers had adopted for themselves almost all the immediate political aims of the French Socialist Party. Here are the veterans' demands:

1. Dissolution of Parliament and new elections.

2. An electoral system based on proportional representation.

3. Votes for women.

4. Fiscal reform, with increase of direct taxation and lowering of indirect taxes.

5. Government control and coordination of basic industries.

6. Placing of the nation's credit at the "service of labor instead of leaving it to exploit labor."

7. Reduction of working hours without reduction of salaries and wages.

8. Organization of mankind's leisure to preserve the physical well-being of all.

9. Utilization of sterile capital for the construction of useful public works to absorb the unemployed.

In international affairs, despite the lip service they politely paid to the mischievous foreign policy of the Quai d'Orsay, the demands of the veterans were no less surprising. To the consternation of the General Staff, the banks, the Comité des Forges, and Schneider-Creusot, they proclaimed the "necessity of international regulation and control of the private manufacture and sale of arms as one of the best means of preserving world peace." And just as a warning they "underlined the danger of economic wars engendered by the egoistic turning back of nations upon themselves."

The cruelest of all the planks voted by the veterans was one concerning the corrupt French press: "The National Confederation of War Veterans recognizes that the realization of its program supposes necessarily an enlightened public opinion. It therefore demands the establishment of a professional status for all journalists, and government control of the resources of all news agencies and newspapers in order that these may be operated in the service of truth instead of being allowed to mislead public opinion by untrustworthy news."

But if the fascist reactionaries are stopped, that is not to say that the republican reactionaries are. Hardly had the war veterans disbanded when the so-called National Union Government decided to lop four billion francs off the budget. How? By squeezing the last sou out of the Little Man, of course. Nearly a half-billion was to be cut out of social insurance; three-quarters of a billion was to be saved by pensioning a tenth of the state's civil servants; 360,000,000 francs was to be derived through straight 5 and 10 per cent salary cuts of all remaining state employees, even the lowest paid; a half-billion was to come from civilian pensions; and 628,000,000 francs through cuts in various ministerial budgets, half of this from the ministries concerned with national defense. The left had clamored for cuts in the army, navy, and air-force budgets, and the 314,000,000 francs saved in those services is a bone thrown to them—but only a bone.

The Communists, who had protested that billions were

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being taken from the Little Man and not one cent from war expenditures, raved more savagely than the reactionaries at the national-defense cuts. Their war cry now is, "314,000,000 francs off the soldiers' and sailors' food! No!" Maybe they are right. Maybe that is where the military cuts will be applied.

As I write these last lines, the above-outlined "economies," amounting to more than two and a half billion francs, are being promulgated by presidential decree, since Parliament, which would not have dared to pass them, is on a convenient two months' holiday.

It is evident that the "little men" are not going to take them lying down. The Communist union of state employees has already voted to walk out on May 1. The Socialist Confederation of State Employees—comprising the large majority of civil servants—at a hurriedly convoked convention announced that it would "counter the application of the decrees with all the means at its disposal." In the last resort, of course, that means a strike, and a strike will tie up the entire government machinery, as the nation learned during the recent one-day general strike, when, throughout France, these low-paid functionaries walked out almost to a man, forcing all state offices to close and holding up the post, telegraph, and telephone systems.

The little men in the state employ having been called upon to bear most of the burden, the war veterans will shortly be asked to shoulder the rest. Doumergue did not quite dare to announce in today's decrees that he was cutting a billion and a half off the ex-soldiers' allotments. He says he will try by persuasion to induce the veterans to make what he calls a "voluntary contribution." But the old soldiers are in no mood for this. They can barely exist on what they receive now. And if they get together, as seems probable, with the powerful civil servants' unions, the smiling Doumergue will have to give ground, or go home.

France is in for troubled times. The people, already staggering under top-heavy taxes and the highest price level in the world, are not convinced that further deflation, at a moment when Great Britain and the United States seem to be practicing successful inflation, is a good thing for them. They want to know, too, why big business and the wealthy are not being called upon to contribute an additional sou to balance this year's budget. They know that the state cuts will be a signal for further reduction of salaries and wages by private enterprise. They are nervous about the copy of a secret document, published by Léon Blum the other day, which showed that the General Staff of the army was preparing to take over things during a "period of public tension."

Already the temper of the people is beginning to boil over. The other night at Tours the police had to call off a public meeting which was to have been addressed by Scapini, the blind deputy from Paris and a blind reactionary. A mob of 2,000 Communists, Socialists, and left republicans broke through the police guard and threatened to storm the meeting hall. The police were forced to give in. They were forced to escort Deputy Scapini and his reactionary friends to the station and put them safely on the Paris train.

This incident—many like it are occurring almost daily all over France—proves at least one thing—that it will take more than an easy "march on Rome" or a lieutenant and four men to end democracy in this country.

Confusion in China

By CRISPIAN CORCORAN

Tientsin, China, March 30

MORE than a month has passed since the suppression of the Fukien rebellion in China. The suppression was accomplished by a judicious mixture of bombings from the air for the troops and substantial wads of good Bank of China notes for the leaders. Out of sight, the Foochow regime is out of mind. Eugene Chen sits in his hotel in Hongkong, Li Chai-sum negotiates with the government for passage money to Europe, and Nanking issues declarations to the effect that the central power is stronger than ever and can now proceed to the tasks of internal reconstruction and annihilation of the "red bandits."

The rebel leaders have all obtained, by negotiation or flight, safe billets for themselves. Only Tsai Ting-kai seems to have vanished from the face of the earth. The Nineteenth Route Army has been, in the polite phrase, "reorganized." Here is a little item of the "reorganization." A hundred and twenty soldiers were placed on a small steamer for repatriation to Canton. When the steamer arrived in that city, the authorities decided not to permit it to unload. It stood in port for four days. Food gave out. Survivors relate how the maddened soldiers fought each other for the tinest morsels and for mere sips of water. Those who were wounded and thus incapacitated for the struggle died untended in the hold. Finally the survivors were taken off. It seems that the soldiers were not permitted to land because Nanking did not promptly remit to Canton the sum required to repatriate them. For the same reason, although the ship stood several hundred yards from the docks, not a bite of food or a drop of water was sent to the starving men.

To get back to our subject (our subject, be it understood, is the ostentatious activity of politicians and generals, not the unbelievable suffering of those who fight their battles), Nanking, having suppressed the Fukien clique, remembered that there was an anti-red campaign on. Aeroplanes, bought by popular subscription for use against the Japanese amid declarations of "no more civil war," have left off bombing Foochow and begun bombing the Soviet centers. Chiang Kai-shek announces that all Communists in all provinces will be suppressed by August.

In the North an interesting situation has developed. General Sun Tien-ying, whose troops distinguished themselves in the "big-sword" fighting on the Great Wall last year, is in revolt. Another ex-hero follows the example of Tsai Ting-kai. The reason? A very long time ago Sun, in reward for his services, was appointed Land Reclamation Commissioner for Chinghai (Kokonor). Kokonor is a long way off, but Sun, a typical feudal chieftain, was game. Instead of the permitted 10,000, he enrolled 100,000 men, mostly ex-Manchurian volunteers and others who had fought the Japanese in the North. Soon he began his march, and the complications came thick and fast. On the Shensi-Kansu border he was politely told by General Ma Hung-kuei, Mohammedan military and political "boss" of the Northwest, that he could not pass through his territory. Unfortunately there is no other way of getting to Kokonor. The rival generals blustered. The Shensi authorities complained that

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100,000 extra men to feed in the province was no joke. The 100,000 men in question, still in summer outfits, declared that rather than die of cold and hunger they would fight it out. Here was a dilemma for Nanking. Sun was an authorized officer of the government going to the scene of his appointment. Ma, also a government officer, would not let him. The Northwest is important and Ma Hung-kuei is its undisputed lord and master. Nanking could not remove him without a first-class war. So it gave orders to Sun to stay where he was.

Sun could not stay where he was. Shensi could not support his men, who were hungry and rebellious. He informed the government of this. The government floundered hopelessly. The result of this sorry mess was a new civil war in the Northwest, with Sun Tien-ying besieging Ningsia City, Ma's center. According to latest advices a "punitive" expedition has already arrived to eradicate Sun and his 100,000 men, who, poor fellows, believed they were really going to new hunting grounds in Kokonor. In the expedition are some of those very aeroplanes bought by the people, for which money was collected under the slogans "No More Civil War" and "Resistance to the Japanese."

From the Great Wall has come another menace. An ex-bandit, Liu Kwei-tang, who had a profitable time last year changing his allegiance, for a consideration, from Manchukuo to China and back again, has started a southward expedition with 3,000 men. These men are frankly out for loot and nothing but loot. They are unpaid, unclothed, and desperate. The 3,000 men have swooped down, practically unopposed, for more than 1,000 miles, through Chahar, Hopei, Shansi, and Honan, over the Yellow River and almost down to the Yangtze, leaving desolation behind them. An army of 120,000 men has been trying for weeks to suppress these desperate "bandits." But in China government troops have not even the remote prospect of pay to fight for, while bandits battle for their own skins, and loot. Because of this difference, the 120,000 can make no headway against the 3,000. The government is now fearful that Sun Tien-ying with his 100,000 men will sweep through Shensi to join the reds under Ho Lung in northern Szechuan. Liu's 3,000 bandits, too, would make good recruits for the red armies. After all, the Kiangsi Soviet pays its troops. So Chiang decrees new anti-red campaigns, and every Kuomintang organ in the country inveighs against the rebels.

The suppression of the Fukien rebellion has not strengthened the Nanking government either in fact or in prestige. The administration continues to disintegrate, with the Japanese working cautiously but effectively behind the scenes. Border provinces, such as Sinkiang and Tibet, have completely severed connections with China.

The Pu Yi coronation adds insult to injury. In the face of all this, Chiang Kai-shek goes on fighting for personal power, and his Canton counterpart, Grand Satrap Chen Chi-teng, arms himself for an eventual contest which will place him upon the throne of his nominal chief. The politicians in Nanking mean well, but they are reduced to devising stratagems to justify the dictatorship. Not only has the Nanking government not taken one single decisive step during the period of national crisis; it has not even made one really significant statement. "Action is easy, understanding is difficult," said the ancient sages of China, and Sun Yat-sen after them. What are we to say to a government of men of "intellect" engaged in the really difficult process of cultivating "understanding" at the behest of a man of action who has his own interpretation of the proverb?

Woe to the weak! The picture is a dark one. Shallow pates may prate of the peculiar ways of the heathen Chinee. Those who have preserved even a small share of understanding see 400,000,000 human beings wrestling with death, natural and man-made; harassed by fat-bellied merchants and swaggering militarists at home; giving a share of their sweat and blood to imperialists, white and yellow; and taking up again and again, doggedly, persistently, and tragically, stolidly and hopelessly, the threads of life that break at every instant. The strong have one failing. They must eternally be at each other's throats. And they must conquer by the concerted strength of the weak. Sooner or later the numberless weak of China will realize this and give practical form to the realization. Till then they will go on paying the penalty that history demands of those who refuse to learn the lesson in time.

In the Driftway

THE Roosevelt Stock Company has had a pretty successful run since it opened in Washington in March, 1933. It got off to a good start. In his first role, as Eliza crossing the ice in the big spring break-up of that year, Mr. Roosevelt played with great conviction and finesse; since then, with the help of some excellent publicity, the company has built up a popular reputation that the Republican Dramatic Club will find it difficult to beat. Personally the Drifter was never persuaded by the company's performance of "They Knew What They Wanted," and despite the propaganda of that clever press agent, Mark Sullivan, he thinks the Brain Trust put on a pretty poor imitation of Hamlet. But the Home Loan Act, especially the scene where President Roosevelt comes in at the last moment and takes over the mortgage on the old homestead, was undoubtedly a terrific hit, while that quaint old swashbuckler, Hugh Johnson, is always funny with his loud but playful threats to "crack down" on his old playmates, the industrialists.

* * * * *

ON its dramatic showing the Administration should be able to hold out until November, 1936, and get its contract renewed. But the Drifter has misgivings about its ventures into art. Early this year 3,761 artists equipped with paint and brushes and pencils were turned loose at government expense ($1,408,381) on the unsullied canvas, the blank walls, and the plain drawing-paper of the nation and told to make pictures for the Public Works of Art Project and posterity. According to the figures, PWAP was a great success. The federal government now owns some 15,000 works of art, of which several hundred are murals in public buildings. At present 500 selected items are on view at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington and have received favorable critical comment. The fate of the 501st item is what makes the Drifter wonder just what kind of whirlwind the Adminstration will reap in the next election. The painting in question showed American sailors on shore leave. As the Baltimore *Sun* pointed out, "a close study of

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the scene leads the observer to believe the sailors have been drinking, that their salutations to the girls were unconventional, and that in not all cases were the advances being resented." It was scheduled for exhibition at the Corcoran, but the Navy Department heard about it As a result, Secretary Swanson swooped down and with the aid and advice of Assistant Secretary of the Navy Henry L. Roosevelt suppressed it. "It reflected," said Mr. Roosevelt, "unfairly upon the men of the navy." The Drifter suggests that Mr. Roosevelt tell that to the marines. Meanwhile he wonders how many of the 15,000 works of art turned out to be "pictures of teacher." In particular he wonders just what the second- and third-class postmasters of America, as they sit reading the incoming postcards, think of the murals their President has given them. The answer may show up in the convention in the summer of 1936. And it would be quite true to American form if Mr. Roosevelt lost his job not because he failed to abolish poverty but because he allowed artists to cover post-office walls with pictures that local Democrats happened not to like.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

A Dollar's Worth of Boloney

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

As you are well aware, the enemies of France never lose an occasion to attack her honor, her prestige, her material interests. Last year there was that abominable campaign to make people in America believe that France does not like to pay her debts. This year another campaign, much more painful, has been launched; its object is to spread reports in America concerning the "dear life" in France, and thus kill our tourism. The "dear life," is it a reality? And should it discourage my friends in New York from making a sojourn in the City of Light? Having read that *The Nation* is interested in this question, I decided to make what we journalists in France call a Grand Investigation. With pencil and paper in hand I visited the Rayon d'Alimentation of the Bon Marché, the Macy's of the Left Bank. From there I went to the St. Germain branch of Félix Potin. I finished my tour at the nearby branch of Damoy. (Need I explain to your cultured and cosmopolitan readers that Potin and Damoy are the Butlers and Bohacks of France?)

I am submitting to the artists and writers who read *The Nation* a carefully calculated list of prices of foodstuffs; for I have observed during the last few years that American artists and writers who come to France are more interested in such prices than in the price of a room and bath at the Lutetia. Here, then, is what an American dollar can buy today at any of these bargain stores: one pound of the best cuts of lamb; three-fourths of a pound of porterhouse steak; two pounds of the best "Canada" apples; one and a half pounds of pears; one pint of sour cream; half a pound of smoked salmon; one pound of salami. Have I made it clear, Mr. Editor, that any *one* of the above named items can be had for a dollar? If so, I can continue, giving a slightly more Aryan turn to my list: one pound of boloney—*pur porc;* two pounds of boloney—*pur cheval;* nine ounces of the best smoked ham; a pound of fresh salmon or sole; two pounds of finnan haddie; one dozen oysters—best grade; two dozen oysters—lower grade; a pound and a fourth of butter; a half-pound bag of good chocolates; four ounces of pâté de foie gras; a pound bag of cookies or a pound of pound cake. I make no mention of things like eggs or vegetables, whose prices vary with the season, or of canned fruit, whose price doesn't quite reach one dollar per can, or of fresh pineapple, which isn't sold in halves.

Cigarettes can be considered as part of a *déjeuner;* a dollar can buy fifty of the ordinary grade Americans smoke. Kerosene for the cookstove is available at the rate of six and a half quarts for a dollar. Matches are also plentiful; a dollar can buy three boxes of 500. I pass in Ciceronian silence over the twenty-dollar shoes, the eight-dollar madras shirts, the five-thousand dollar automobiles; let another correspondent sing of these. Assuring you, sir, of my indefectible attachment for Paris, *quand même,* I remain

Paris, March 29 IRWIN C. SAFIR

Upton Sinclair for Governor

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In *The Nation* of March 21 I notice a statement by Oswald Garrison Villard: "There is a distinct interest in the gubernatorial candidacy of Upton Sinclair, which has gone so well that the big newspapers are beginning to take notice of it and of the crowds at his meetings; yet no one who is following the campaign carefully believes that Sinclair will get the Democratic nomination."

A political organization of Los Angeles sent out a thousand postal cards to persons throughout the State, selected at random from telephone books. These cards listed half a dozen Democratic and as many Republican candidates who have been frequently spoken of, and asked for a statement of preference. Upton Sinclair received 67 per cent of all the Democratic preferences expressed and his percentage was double that of the most favored Republican candidate, Mr. Rolph.

A clergyman in Los Angeles interested in politics sent an inquiry to a thousand of his most active supporters asking whom they favored of all candidates. The majority specified Sinclair. A poll of the employees of a tire factory revealed 92 per cent for Sinclair. A poll of all the residents in a precinct in North Hollywood, 300 families, revealed 86 per cent for Sinclair. A poll of 176 families in East Oakland gave 75 per cent for Sinclair, 2 per cent against him, and 23 per cent "on the fence."

Writing in Rob Wagner's *Script,* Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., quotes Representative John Dockweiler to the effect that betting in California is six to four in favor of Sinclair to beat any opponent. A friend writes us from Washington that he saw a letter from one of the shrewdest politicians in California in which this man says that if he were betting at present he would bet on Sinclair.

The foregoing should be sufficient to cast doubt on Mr. Villard's statement.

Hollywood, March 30 RUBE BOROUGH

Write Your Senator!

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The Birth Control bill for the amendment of the criminal code has reached the calendar of the United States Senate. The recommended amendment reads as follows:

> The provisions of this section shall not be construed to apply to any book or information relating to the prevention of conception, or article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing designed, adapted, or intended for the prevention of conception for use (1) by any physician legally licensed to practice medicine in any State, Territory, or

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the District of Columbia, or by his direction or prescription; (2) by any medical college legally chartered under the laws of any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia; (3) by any druggist in filling any prescription of a licensed physician; or (4) by any hospital or clinic licensed in any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia.

We urge all readers of *The Nation* who believe it desirable that this bill should be passed to help by writing immediately to their Senators, requesting them to vote favorably for it.

Huntington, N. Y., April 26 ETHEL CLYDE,
Chairman, Eastern Regional States National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control

The Intelligent Traveler

Tours to the Soviet Union

ACCORDING to Intourist, 117 parties of Americans will visit Soviet Russia this year—a greater number than ever before. The following summer trips have been selected for mention because of the quality of leadership or the character of the trips themselves. It can be stated without qualification that the American who is visiting the Soviet Union for the first time, who does not speak Russian, and who has limited time and money gets more out of travel with a well-conducted group than he can hope to get traveling on his own. A discussion of the many reasons would transcend the space limits of this article.

All the tours listed below include in their rates the transatlantic passage. Most of the rates include also the costs of transit across Europe. However, all these tours, so far as is known, may be joined abroad. It is important to note that steamship lines quote advantageous through rates to and from the Soviet Union. If the traveler makes his own arrangements outside the Soviet Union, he should take this into consideration in purchasing steamship passage. If the tour does not include complete transportation to and from the Soviet Union, those taking the tour from New York should get a rate from the organization running the tour which *will* include complete round-trip transportation.

The First Moscow University offers a four weeks' summer school this year with courses in education, economics, psychology, sociology, art, and literature. Instruction will be in English by Soviet professors and specialists. Two weeks of travel after the study period are part of the plan. Six rates are quoted, with varying accommodations. The lowest is $400.80, including round-trip, third-class transportation from New York. Address the Institute of International Education, 2 West Forty-fifth Street, New York.

The Moscow Theater Festival takes place September 1-10. Principal theaters will present revivals of their most successful plays. Oliver Sayler and H. W. L. Dana, authorities on the Russian theater, are conducting parties. Oliver Sayler's group spends twelve days in the Soviet Union. There are two rates, of which the lower is $350, third class throughout; or $92 for the time in the Soviet Union. Its membership is not limited. Address the Drama League of America, Barbizon Plaza Hotel, New York. Mr. Dana's group, limited to twelve members, spends thirteen days in the Soviet Union. The rate is $395, third class throughout. Address the Bureau of University Travel, 11 Boyd Street, Newton, Massachusetts. Theater tickets are included in the prices of both tours. A schedule of plays is available.

Dr. Goodwin Watson, of Teachers College, Columbia University, will direct a "Psychology of Social Change" study tour, which is limited to twenty-five persons "whose training or professional background has given them a sincere interest in the methods whereby social changes are brought about." The tour spends three days in Moscow, two days in Leningrad, and a week in Aberdeen, Scotland, attending the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The rate is $369, third class throughout. Address Pocono Study Tours, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Louis Fischer, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation* and author of "The Soviets in World Affairs" and "Men and Machines in Russia," has spent eleven years in the U. S. S. R. He will conduct a party of ten "serious students of Russian affairs" on a forty-one-day trip. The itinerary includes Erivan, the capital of Armenia. There are two rates, of which the lower is $761, third class on the ocean, second class in Russia. Address the Open Road, 56 West Forty-fifth Street, New York.

General Victor A. Yakhontoff served under the Czar and Kerensky. He has revisited Russia three times since the revolution and is the author of "Russia and the Soviet Union in the Far East." General Yakhontoff heads a party, limited to fifteen members, which will spend nineteen days in the Soviet Union, preceded by a month's cruise in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The rate is $675, tourist class on the ocean, second class in Russia. Address the Open Road, 56 West Forty-fifth Street, New York.

Irina Skariatina, a member of the former Russian aristocracy, is known for her three books, "A World Can End," "A World Begins," and "The First to Go Back." With her American husband, Victor F. Blakeslee, she will lead a group limited to twenty-five which will spend twenty-five days in the Soviet Union, with short stops in a number of European cities coming and going, and attendance at the Passion Play. There are two rates, of which the lower is $830, tourist class on the ocean, second class in the Soviet Union. Address Bartlett Tours Company, 1511 Locust Street, Philadelphia.

An "Economic Survey Tour of the U. S. S. R." will be conducted by Dr. Karl Scholz, professor of economics at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania. He has visited the Soviet Union three times. The group, limited to twelve members, will spend twenty-five days in the Soviet Union. The rate is $565, third class throughout (expenses from the Soviet border back to the port of embarkation not included). Address Bartlett Tours Company, 1511 Locust Street, Philadelphia.

JOHN ROTHSCHILD

[*Mr. Rothschild will describe additional Russian tours in next week's issue.*]

Contributors to This Issue

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Books, Drama, the Dance

Skyfall

By WILLARD MAAS

in the green hour
of green evening

unnamed bird and flower
the mouths lifted

we move through night
and night-swiftness

plumed wings of evening
dripping elms stone-moss
moon and star glitter

we move
softly
hands within hands

silence within silence

A Book That Scared Its Author

The Economy of Abundance. By Stuart Chase. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

LET it be said at the outset that this is the most interesting book which Mr. Chase has given us. It has all his old qualities. It has his ingenuity and lucidity of exposition, his flair for the striking example. It is rich in those "amazing stories" of new industrial technique with which he enlivens his pages. It contains valuable statistical material. Moreover, Mr. Chase now adds to these qualities passages of economic analysis which are always interesting, and sometimes penetrating.

Having said this, it will be our less grateful task to concentrate upon the book's deficiencies. As the book stands, the argument is wholly destructive. It goes a considerable way toward showing us the nature of the mess we are in. But it offers us nothing worth mentioning by way of guidance in getting out of the mess.

Let us try to summarize the essence of Mr. Chase's thesis. The first half-dozen chapters are devoted to demonstrating the fact that mankind has now virtually solved the problem of production. There is not that fantastic plenty about which the technocrats babbled. There are certain "tight places," such as housing, in which the meeting of the genuine human needs of the whole population will still strain productive resources. However, all things considered, Mr. Chase concludes that there are in America ample productive resources to satisfy immediately a simple "health and decency budget" for every citizen, "while these productive resources would produce in, say, a decade a standard of living three times higher—if you must have the money total, though I warn you it means almost nothing—six thousand dollars' worth of consumers' goods per year at 1929 prices."

Then why do we starve? Mr. Chase knows the answer to this question and gives it. We do not produce today in order to satisfy human needs of food, clothing, and shelter. On the contrary, we produce for what Mr. Chase, following Thorstein Veblen, calls "vendibility." It is profit, and profit alone, Mr. Chase emphasizes in a series of vivid passages, which has been and is the whole motive of production. Whether or not a certain act of production will yield a profit is and must be in present circumstances the sole criterion of whether that act of production is performed. Under the present system, for business men to consider, when they made their decisions to produce or not produce, whether the product would satisfy some outstanding human need would be quite impossible.

Now we come to the main point which Mr. Chase's book as a whole endeavors to make. The potential abundance of a product, the capacity to produce it quickly, easily, with little expenditure of labor and in vast quantities, destroys the "vendibility" of that product. In plain terms, it destroys its value. Take the economist's favorite case, that of air. Air is the most essential of all needs for human beings. Without it they die in a few minutes. Yet it has no value in the economist's sense of the word, for it is absolutely abundant. No labor is expended in its production. Therefore profit cannot be made out of it. Just in so far as food, clothing, shelter, and other commodities begin to approach this point of absolute abundance, the possibility of making a profit out of their production diminishes.

Now we begin to see the other side of Mr. Chase's inventory of abundance. The ease and cheapness with which we can now produce great quantities of many fundamental commodities mean that it is becoming more and more difficult to extort profit from the production of these commodities.

This is the main economic argument of the book. So far as it goes it is unanswerable. But surely almost every reader will feel that it does not go far enough. Granted this general tendency, granted the difficulty with which it confronts the profit-making system, how precisely does the thing work out in practice? How are we to deduce from this general truth the present facts of capitalist crisis? All that Mr. Chase's argument seems to prove is that profits, or more exactly, the rate of profit per thousand pounds of capital invested in production, must be decreasing. But why should this cause crises? Is it not possible that the capitalists will be forced to content themselves with this lower rate of profit, even down to one, to a half, to a quarter per cent? Moreover, the same process—viz., the growth of wealth—which reduces the rate of profit must obviously be increasing the mass of the total capital—for that is the same thing as the growth of wealth—upon which the profit is being made. Hence, the capitalists must be finding a compensation for their falling rate of profit in the growing masses of capital upon which this profit is made. For example, ten years ago they might have got 5 per cent profit on a thousand pounds of capital. Today they may be getting only a 2 per cent rate of profit, but it is on £100,000. Surely there is nothing in this tendency which should drive them out of production, dislocate the whole system, and so produce the tragic paradox of today—the tragic paradox of huge masses of unemployed capital facing equally huge masses of unemployed workers.

Mr. Chase attempts to come to grips with this question, which is at the very heart of the present crisis. He knows that the motive force of capitalism is and must be accumulation. Capitalists do not, and could not conceivably, spend all their rent, interest, and profits. They must reinvest them at a profit, and then they must reinvest the profit of this increased investment, and so on and so on in geometric progression.

But why, Mr. Chase makes "the puzzled reader" ask, "should this in itself cause the crises? There are still, we know, vast, urgent, and, indeed, increasing human wants to be satisfied. Why does not the accumulation of capital simply enable these wants to be satisfied as the classical economists have always promised it would?"

The "puzzled reader," answers Mr. Chase, "is suffering

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from a common point of view. He confuses serviceability with vendibility. The function of capitalism is not to supply people with things which they want. Goods are supplied, yes, but only if enough money is forthcoming in exchange for them to cover all costs of production including interest, plus a margin of profit."

It must be confessed that if this is the answer, most readers will remain puzzled. If the production of a margin of profit is what the capitalists demand in order to satisfy all our wants, then in heaven's name let us give it to them! It is incomparably better than starving! It cannot be this dividend which in itself is holding up production. What is holding up production, as Mr. Chase says immediately, is that the masses of the population have not enough money to buy the goods which might be produced. Then why should they not be given the money? Would it not pay the capitalists to do so?

> But [says Mr. Chase] the equipping of people directly with plenty of money is the one thing that capitalists, particularly bankers, cannot tolerate. Equipping people with money, outside the rules of the game, is inflation, naked and unashamed. It is more feared—see almost any American editorial in 1933—than loss of markets.

Surely this must still seem very unsatisfactory. It cannot be that the capitalists wreck their own system because they will not do something which is "outside the rules of the game." There must be some good reason why they will fight to the death against bringing together their unemployed masses of capital and the unemployed millions of workers, and so producing the goods we need. There is a good reason. But we shall search Mr. Chase's pages in vain for a statement of it.

Very briefly the reason is this. It would not pay the capitalists, in present circumstances, to liberate the purchasing power necessary to use their masses of idle capital. Mr. Chase has observed—though he does not know the real reason for it—that the bigger the total mass of capital being used by the community, the lower—other things being equal—the rate of profit being made on it. But he has not yet seen that a critical point arrives in this process. What the capitalists are interested in is not so much the rate of profit as the total amount of profit which they can make each year.

Let us take a greatly oversimplified example. Let us say, in accordance with our agreed principle that the larger the capital employed the lower is the rate of profit, that when the capitalists—the capitalist class of America as a whole, that is to say—employ all their capital, say, $1,000,000, they can earn a rate of 3 per cent. If they employ only half their capital, $500,000, they can earn a rate of 5 per cent. In these circumstances, they will obviously employ all their capital. For 3 per cent on $1,000,000 is $30,000, while 5 per cent on $500,000 is only $25,000. So they will earn $5,000 more by employing all their capital.

But say that the circumstances are different. Say that they are such that if the capitalists employ half of their capital, $500,000, they will still make a profit of $25,000 (5 per cent), but that if they employ the whole of their capital of $1,000,000 they will only make a profit at the rate of 1 per cent, or an amount of $10,000. Obviously and unquestionably in such circumstances the capitalists will choose to employ only half their capital.

And these are the circumstances of capitalist crisis, the circumstances of today. What happened in 1929 was that the fall in the rate of profit had become so steep that accumulation no longer paid. A greater amount of profit was to be made on a smaller capital than would have been made by employing a bigger capital at a lower rate. What is it, however, that makes the rate of profit fall so steeply? It is what Mr. Chase calls, somewhat vaguely, "abundance." It is, in other words, technical improvement, rationalization, the elimination of human labor, mechanization, call it what you will. In other language, it is the growth of the proportion of constant capital compared to variable capital. It is the higher and higher organic composition of capital. This essential fact of capitalist crisis Mr. Chase has glimpsed but not grasped.

In all earnestness, I ask him to read the first 300 pages of Volume III of "Capital," where he will see these facts established with rigor and precision. He will find that what his wide knowledge of statistical trends and his honest facing of the facts, so far as he sees them, has enabled him to do is to rediscover about one-half of the law of the falling tendency of the rate of profit. It should prove a most exciting experience for Mr. Chase to learn the real reason for the tendency which he has observed empirically.

It must now be admitted that Mr. Chase's failure to discover why the falling rate of profit produces crisis vitiates almost the whole of the rest of the book. He has seen that in general the inexorable tendency of the rate of profit to fall must produce greater and greater difficulties for capitalism. But he has not seen that it is at the moment when the rate of profit falls below the point at which accumulation is advantageous to the capitalist class as a whole that crises occur. Accordingly, he has not understood the perfectly sound reason which prevents the capitalists from allowing that proportion of their capital which stands idle in slumps to be used. They will not allow the production of the goods for the want of which men are starving because if they did, the rate of profit would again be driven toward zero. Nor does Mr. Chase see that the capitalists have a temporary way out of the crisis. They can restore the rate of profit by lowering wages and/or by establishing monopoly-controlled prices, so that it again becomes possible to use a larger proportion at any rate of their capital profitably. Mr. Chase falls accordingly into serious confusions. He suggests in several passages that all we have to do is to issue more money, and that then everybody will be perfectly happy. The capitalists can keep their ownership of the means of production, pocket their profits, and yet all the rest of us will be well clothed, fed, and housed. Surely Mr. Chase can see that his own argument proves that the creation of abundance in any form destroys the profits, and so the privileges and power, of the capitalist class?

In other passages Mr. Chase recognizes this. He has passages which suggest that the capitalists will go on producing in such abundance that they will drive the rate of profit down to zero and so expropriate themselves. Their securities will then be valueless and the capitalists will gladly tear them up.

> The community can have the securities any time the postman wants to pick them up. I have lost all hope of their helping to provide for my old age. To hell with them. I will take the chance of the community's maintaining me in my declining years.

It is nice to know that we can have Mr. Chase's securities. Can we have Morgan's too? We have only to ask such a question as this in order to realize the ludicrous unreality of Mr. Chase's argument. And here we come to the crux of the matter. This whole idea that the capitalist class will quietly expropriate itself by producing so much that the rate of profit will fall to nothing is of course fantastic. What in fact did the capitalists do when in 1929 the rate of profit dropped to that critical point where further accumulation—as demonstrated above—became unprofitable? Did they go on increasing production, manfully accepting lower and lower amounts of profit, nobly and self-sacrificingly expropriating themselves?

As everybody knows, they did, and are still doing, the exact opposite. They closed down production with a bang. But they went much farther than that. They organized, and are still organizing, not merely the cessation of production, but active destruction. Mr. Chase himself gives an account of the destructive activities of the Roosevelt Administration, the burning of corn, the plowing in of cotton, the slaughtering of hogs—the now

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familiar list. Why is all this being done? To restore the rate of profit. Nor, on Mr. Chase's own showing, is there anything "insane," irrational, or for that matter mistaken in adopting the destructive methods in order to achieve this object. On the contrary, these measures, pushed with sufficient destructive vigor, are well calculated to help to restore the rate of profit, to drive it above the critical point at which accumulation becomes profitable. Nor is this all. The rate of profit is not a simply determined factor. All sorts of resources are still open to the capitalists for its restoration to a point at which accumulation becomes once more advantageous. Fundamentally, these methods boil down to reducing wages, either by reducing money rates or by increasing prices. Nor need these methods be temporarily unsuccessful. It is possible—and it has to a large extent been accomplished in America already—to increase the rate of exploitation and to raise prices by the creation of monopolies sufficiently to restore the rate of profit and resume accumulation for a time. This is why Mr. Chase is wrong in supposing that the collapse of American capitalism is a matter of months.

Is he really unable to see or is he wilfully blinding his eyes to the fact that the New Deal is precisely the chosen method of reviving the formula of capitalism, at all costs and at any price? Mr. Roosevelt has made it perfectly clear time and again in his radio speeches to the nation that he is in favor of reestablishing the profitability of industry. And what is more, he is taking measures of unparalleled vigor and ruthlessness in order to accomplish this end.

Nor is it impossible for Mr. Roosevelt to succeed in his task in the short run. The profits of the capitalist class, or at any rate of the dominant section of that class, of the great monopolists, have been pushed up again. Such success, however, can only be short-lived. The rate of profit has been pushed up again but now the very same general law which drove it down to the point of crisis begins to operate once more. With every quantum of accumulation which the American capitalists realize, the pressure of money seeking reinvestment at a profit begins to grow again. Moreover, the very same measures—forcing down of wages, etc.—which restored the rate of profit have narrowed the market. The next crisis will come sooner and be worse than the last. And who will be the new Roosevelt? What will be the New Deal? What further artificial respiration to the rate of profit can there be? One blushes to have to quote Mr. Chase's one constructive suggestion as to what to do when the rate of profit has been finally drowned in the abundance and ease of production:

> Finally, it may be that the community, as symbolized in the federal government, will be driven to adopt the rule of taking over any essential industry if and when it loses a status of genuine security, due to the rise of the technical arts. The instant its costs begin to be padded with waste in any attempt to maintain price levels, the community may have to step in to insure that the benefits of technology be passed on.

"The community may have to step in." Who or what is "the community"? Who or what is this *deus ex machina* which Mr. Chase suddenly, if perfunctorily, invokes to solve everything? All he tells us about it is that it is "symbolized by the federal government," and this is hardly reassuring. Strangely enough, at the other end of Mr. Chase's book he has frankly told us that there is no such thing as the community: "There is no national family, no national plant, no national income, in any collective sense." Indeed, there is not, and there never can be one until mankind has realized its abundance by taking into its own hands, and out of the hands of a tiny monopolistic class, the means for the production of that abundance.

What seems to have happened is that Mr. Chase has been scared by his own argument. I do not know how else to account for the marked degeneration in realism and clarity of thought between the beginning and the end of the book. His main argument is, after all, a demonstration of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, a demonstration confused when compared with the Marxist analysis, but considerably in advance of the work of orthodox bourgeois economists of today. Mr. Chase does demonstrate empirically, though not theoretically, that an economy dependent on profit can, in modern technical conditions, no longer be maintained. He does show that Marx's great prophecy of the extant social system becoming an intolerable fetter upon production has come to pass. Then he draws his sociological conclusions from this overwhelming fact. And all that he has to tell us is that many workers now wear white collars and are called technicians, and that somehow or other this has abolished the class struggle! Or, most pitiful of all, that all that is really the matter is that we do not print enough money (we starve "because of a shortage of pieces of engraved paper"). Finally, when Mr. Chase comes to make a list of the eighteen points which he considers necessary to what he calls an "abundance economy," he says no word of the necessity for abolishing profit—and, consequently, the operation for profit of privately owned means of production. Yet this is surely the one thing which the corpus of his work has proved.

JOHN STRACHEY

The Worm i' the Bud

Tender Is the Night. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

TO label Mr. Fitzgerald's new novel a study in psychological degeneration is not strictly accurate, for such degeneration presupposes an anterior dignity or perfection of character, and none of the characters in this book is made sufficiently measurable at the beginning to give to his later downhill course anything more than a mildly pathetic interest. None of them is even what one might call, in the loosest sense, mature. Richard Diver, young American war veteran turned psychiatrist, is too perfect a specimen of the Yale man of his generation to seem quite plausible as a surgeon of souls. Nicole recovers from her schizophrenia, the effect of an incestuous assault in childhood, only to acquire the neuroses of the frivolous, luxurious, and empty-pated society to which she is restored. And Rosemary Hoyt, that incredible flower of the Hollywood studios, begins, and ends, as hardly more than a glamorous moron. Yet the effect of the novel as a whole is quite as depressing as that of any authentic study in moral and psychological degeneration. The vague depression that hovers over the opening chapters increases in intensity as the book moves on to its sordid termination. It increases, as a matter of fact, in an exact ratio to the growth of our confusion as to the precise reason for the hero's disintegration. Is it that once Nicole is cured of her disease she no longer has need of his kind of love—the old story of the physician unable to heal himself? Is it that her money has acted like a virus to destroy his personality and with it his life-work? Or is it simply that he is a man of weak character, unable to resist temptation and concealing the fact from himself through immersion in alcohol? All these causes are indicated, and any one of them might be made sufficient, but the author's own unwillingness to choose between them, his own uncertainty communicated to the reader, continues to the last. And the result is depressing in the way that confusion in a work of literature is always depressing.

Glamor is here as elsewhere one of the most frequently used words in Mr. Fitzgerald's vocabulary, and because this very abstract word so obviously sums up much important feeling, constituting perhaps a key to Mr. Fitzgerald's sensibility, it may be worth while to submit it to that process of "dissocia-

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tion" which Remy de Gourmont recommended for cases of this kind. Now the word glamor, in Mr. Fitzgerald's writing, is usually applied to people or things or ways of living represented as being, in some total and general sense, attractive. It stands for a whole imponderable compound of desirable qualities—youth, beauty, gaiety, romantic charm. Daisy in "The Great Gatsby" possessed glamor, and so do the two heroines in the present book. But it should be noted that in the case of each of these exquisite creatures to the possession of glamor is added another and more palpably attractive possession—money. In "The Great Gatsby," the narrator, fumbling for an exact description of Daisy, is told by Gatsby himself, "Her voice is full of money."

> That was it. . . . It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it. . . . High in a white palace the king's daughter, the gold girl . . .

And now again, in this new book, we find Nicole's lover reminding her, "You've got too much money. That's the crux of the matter." In other words, for Mr. Fitzgerald's heroes youth and wealth, romance and luxury, love and money become somehow identified in the imagination. "Glamor" becomes a compound of glittering opposites. And because it consists for them in a confusion of essentially irreconcilable elements their surrender to it leads, in the end, either to inglorious death in Long Island swimming pools or to slow deterioration on foreign sands.

This conflict, since that is what it really amounts to, is probably the thing that makes Mr. Fitzgerald an artist, the very distinguished artist that he revealed himself to be in "The Great Gatsby." But the time has come when we must demand a more clean-cut recognition of its elements and a more single-minded effort toward its resolution. The biographer of Gatsby, weary of his riotous excursions into the human heart, returned to the Middle West wanting the whole world to be "in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever." But Dick Diver turns out to be Jay Gatsby all over again, another poor boy with a "heightened sensitivity to the promises of life" betrayed by his own inability to make the right distinctions. And the repetition of the pattern turns out to be merely depressing. It is time now for Mr. Fitzgerald, with his remarkable technical mastery of his craft, to give us a character who is not the victim of adolescent confusion, who is strong enough to turn deaf ears to the jingling cymbals of the golden girl.

WILLIAM TROY

Myths and Myths

Woodrow Wilson. The Caricature, the Myth, and the Man. By Edith Gittings Reid. Oxford University Press. $3.50.

MISS REID has written, at the instigation of the Wilson family, as she herself says, "not an attempt at historical narrative," but a tribute to Wilson, a lifelong friend, as an admirer would do it. Not without some criticisms, of course. But in the main her book is a personal tribute from one who declares frankly that she is "not concerned with whether what he did was right or wrong, but only with why he did it." Miss Reid throws no light on certain vexed questions to which no satisfactory answers have yet been given. She gives the conventional interpretations and explanations of Wilson's policies based on the current newspaper reports, in many cases with no background of real facts. Their lives touched constantly. Mr. Wilson loved to drop in at Miss Reid's home and confide in her. Yet it is plain that, long continued as their friendship was, Miss Reid was and is unaware of many things that happened, with the natural result that she gives us a one-sided picture.

Thus she attributes Wilson's downfall in Paris entirely to his being "steadily undermined at home." Otherwise "a far better peace would have been possible." This is the explanation of his indefensible stand on the question of pensions, against which his economic advisers protested, and on the Tyrol, for example. She denounces America for failing when it was her hero who failed, morally and mentally betrayed by his vanity, his ignorance, his refusal to take advice. It will certainly be a revelation to every observer at Paris to hear that "his [Wilson's] agony on realizing [at the signing of the treaty] that the Germans looked upon him as a victor almost broke his heart." It is equally absurd to say that he fought "heroically" to keep us out of war after January, 1917.

What evidence has Miss Reid for the statement that in going to war the President had behind him the "great mass of the plain people"? If that was true, why the army of spies, the innumerable arrests in the Liberty Loan drives, the dragooning at the pistol point of great groups of our population in the Middle West and Northwest? Similarly Miss Read repeats the old falsehoods as to the "explosions and burnings of munition factories due to German agents, the criminal conspiracies against our country," without apparently being aware that most of these matters have been under judicial scrutiny and that the verdict, as in the case of the great explosion in New York harbor, has been for the German and against the American contentions.

If Miss Reid had known of these things, or had today the faintest idea of the bitter resentment in the West and elsewhere against the man elected to keep us out of war, she could never have attributed the defeat of Wilson and Cox and the League to Henry Cabot Lodge and the Republicans, or to anyone else but Mr. Wilson himself. It is still another example of Miss Reid's partisanship that she accepts the Wilson family version of the Tumulty message in 1920 announcing that the President was favoring Mr. Cox's election without having been fair enough even to ask Mr. Tumulty for his side of the case. Incidentally, she makes much of the President's appointment of Mr. Tumulty despite the fact that he was a Catholic. Does she know nothing else about that?

But enough. Miss Reid writes very well indeed, and plausibly. Yet her book does not destroy the Wilson myth; it adds to it.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The Camera Eye

In All Countries. By John Dos Passos. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

FIXED between the biographical, newsreel, and narrative portions of Mr. Dos Passos's two latest novels are sections called the Camera Eye, odd bits of reminiscence of personalities, landscapes, incidents, sights, sounds, shapes, smells, colors, and contours; a gesture or a modulation of voice which has been registered indelibly in the author's memory. Contrary to those critics who find these parts regrettable vestiges of an unfortunate romantic inclination, I find the best of them very good descriptive writing, though the worst are correspondingly bad. For whatever Mr. Dos Passos perceives, he perceives acutely. It is when he attempts by invalid associations or questionable deductions to impose other than inherent meanings upon the thing perceived that he stumbles, and confuses and frequently bores the reader. In the present book, a collection of travel sketches of Russia, Mexico, and Spain, with pieces of reporting on Sacco and Vanzetti, Harlan County, the political conventions of 1932, and Washington, 1933, the style is that of the Camera Eye, impressionistic and highly effective when convincing, formless and dull when badly done.

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In all the countries he visited Mr. Dos Passos found the same struggle toward a political-social-economic rebirth, the same strife between the "men in black clothes and stiff collars" and the collarless, homespun-clad men. In Russia the preliminary battle has been won; in Mexico and Spain it is beginning; in the United States only the first volleys have sounded. While the American notes do not contain the lyric passages to be found in the foreign notes, they are with one exception the most lucid, vivid pieces in the book. They are written with less tendency to oversimplify the author's impressions, and they contain a balance of humor which bestows upon them a firm, direct plausibility. Hoover, "not the boss type; more the confidential foreman," rings true; the dance marathon placed in contrast to the meeting of the unemployed as a symbol of the death of the jazz age is authentic; and appropriate is the feeling at the Communist convention of "the tremendous intoxication with history that is the great achievement of Communist solidarity." The bad slip occurs when a breathless hush one evening in Harlan County recalls a similar moment in Avocourt wood and by such token, "This [the strike] was war all right."

The best of the book is to be found in the descriptions of Spain as seen from an airplane, "ridged like a walnut shell," of Indian women squatting in Mexico "heavy like granite idols," of the steel engraving that is Lake Atitlan, and the burned-out crater of a volcano that is Leningrad today. Here are perception and the right phrase, the thing seen and the quality recognized. Suspicion arises only when Lenin's birthplace suggests a town on a bluff of the Mississippi, and hence "nothing foreign about Lenin"; or when enamored, as others besides Rousseau have been, by the innocence of manner and speech of peasants, "you feel that at last you're learning the truth." Then perception becomes blurred and deductions unreliable.

FLORENCE CODMAN

A Queen and Her Minister

The Queen and Mr. Gladstone. By Philip Guedalla. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $5.

"THE long coast line of the nineteenth century is receding now, and all its reputations begin to stand out in their true proportions," observes Mr. Guedalla. In this mood he presents evidence for the revaluation of two of its major figures who "have been to some extent the victims of historical injustice." From 6,000 relevant papers in the possession of the Gladstone Trustees he has selected 1,205 items, some five-sixths hitherto unpublished, and illuminated them with 153 pages of commentary, historical and biographical. The opening pages make a lively onslaught upon the biographical methods of the Stracheyan 1920's, which once were not without fascination for Mr. Guedalla himself:

> The heroes of the past were vigorously probed; and the prevailing mood acclaimed the spirited results of these irreverent dissections, although there was a slight suspicion that the more exciting specimens owed more to their investigators' zeal than to the objects of their study. For investigation was powerfully aided by an impressive apparatus of guess-work that was termed psychology and proved upon examination to consist in equal parts of things that were not so and things that everybody knew before.

Thus were manufactured for popular derision caricatures of Queen Victoria and Gladstone, whom Mr. Guedalla restores to their real complexity and impressiveness in a sobered style that achieves admirable condensation and clarity.

The correspondence extends from 1845, when Gladstone became Colonial Secretary under Peel, to 1897, when the amazing octogenarian, "half major prophet and half force of nature,"

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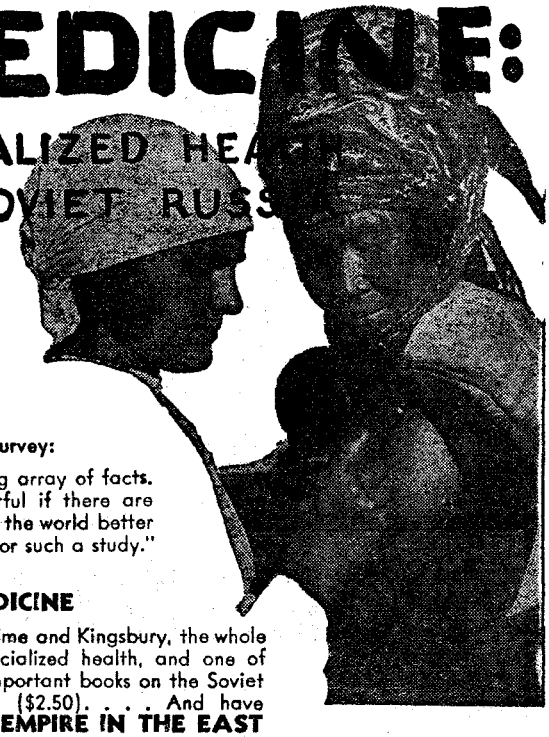

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was only two years retired from his fourth premiership, and the indomitable Queen had less than four years to reign. The drama of their relations needs no artificial heightening, for in the background are the destinies of an empire and in the foreground two figures of high seriousness and the grand style obliged to cooperate under terms that became increasingly difficult. While Victoria followed the usual course of nature by becoming conservative with the years, Gladstone passed from the Toryism of his youth and maturity through a Liberal middle life to an old age that perilously approached Radicalism.

Mr. Guedalla describes the consequent phases of their relations as harmony, divergence, estrangement, antipathy. The progress toward antipathy was accelerated by an external influence with which Strachey and Maurois have made us familiar—the flattery of Disraeli cunningly employed to win the widowed and lonely Queen to his political views and animosities, an advantage which he and Lord Salisbury did not scruple to maintain by secret correspondence when in Opposition. For literary treatment Disraeli is the more interesting figure, but Mr. Guedalla's sympathies are clearly with the sportsman-like Gladstone, who never dreamed of tampering with the constitutional neutrality of the Crown. Yet they are likewise with the Queen, who was obliged repeatedly to remind her pedantically correct Liberal minister that she was a "woman," who "won't be a machine." If Gladstone's hatred of oppression opened his eyes to the Irish question and the evils of imperialism, his sovereign's conscience was more sensitive to economic evils at home, whether taxes upon matches, beer, and other articles consumed by the poor, or the proposal to reward with a peerage Lionel Rothschild's stock-broking, which seemed "not the less a species of gambling, because it is on a gigantic scale." As Mr. Shaw's "Apple Cart" has shown, the proper role of royalty in a democratic-capitalistic state is by no means a closed question.

Mr. Guedalla has produced a volume interesting to the general reader and serviceable to the historian. The former will enjoy the vigorous personalities that shine through the conventional third person of official correspondence, more obviously in the Queen's case because of her schoolgirl habit of copious underlining, and the reproduction of photographs of many of their political contemporaries. The scholar, although perhaps desiring a fuller index and regretting the omission, as "of limited interest to the general reader," of some 300 items printed in the British edition, will appreciate the careful annotation of the letters and the full and definite references to authorities drawn upon. The new letters continue the process of rehabilitation begun by the three-volume "Letters of Queen Victoria," and confirm John Morley's portrayal of Gladstone as a high-minded statesman.

EMERY NEFF

Shorter Notices

Sex Habits: A Vital Factor in Well-Being. By Abraham Buschke and Friedrich Jacobsohn. Translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul. Emerson Books. $2.50.

"We speak as biologists and not as moralists," the authors of this book state. When we remember that they speak also as eminent specialists in genito-urinary diseases who have seen in countless patients the effects of different moral attitudes, we listen respectfully to their counsel, especially their emphasis of the dangers of infection with venereal disease. They appreciate that sexual potency and impulse reach fruition some years before our economic and moral systems allow licit gratification. They indicate the possible solutions of this dilemma and conclude that "the happiest and most moral" is "an intimacy with

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a beloved and loving sexual partner." An unexplained inconsistency appears ten pages farther on when they insist that they "have no sympathy with the demand that the sexual distresses of our time . . . should be overcome by the unrestricted preconjugal practice of birth control. . . ." Just how, then, do our authors propose that the young people carry on their "intimacies"? This book is written in a commendable straightforward manner without innuendoes. The two goals the authors seek for the individual are a satisfactory married life and the avoidance of venereal disease. There is a strong plea for strict monogamy, for the "abandonment of masculine libertinage." The authors advocate easier divorce, more liberal interpretation of laws against abortion, and—within the limits noted above—wider dissemination of contraceptive knowledge. The weakest section is that on heredity, which has in it many unproved assertions about the inheritance of insanity, epilepsy, and criminality—none of which is defined with greater detail.

Among the Lost People. By Conrad Aiken. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.25.

Mr. Aiken's short stories have the virtues of his poetry, and none of the faults of his novels. In the novels a glittering verbiage is used to disguise the mawkishness of emotion and the general absence of content. The short stories, on the other hand, have well-defined and significant themes, are keenly analytic in their treatment of emotion, and are written in a style that has the precision and verbal beauty of Mr. Aiken's poetry. "Among the Lost People" is a collection of twelve narratives, some of which are reprinted from magazines. There are three highly effective horror stories, a metaphysical monologue on the phenomenon of consciousness, and a masterful study of adolescence, Silent Snow, Secret Snow. A single mood runs through most of the stories—a sense of the irony of human destinies and the pathos of human pretensions.

Select Letters of St. Jerome. Translated by F. A. Wright. *Diodorus of Sicily.* Volume I. Translated by C. H. Oldfather. *Sextus Empiricus.* Volume I. Translated by R. G. Bury. *Arrian.* Volume II. Translated by E. Iliff Robson. *Athenaeus.* Volume V. Translated by C. B. Gulick. Loeb Classical Library. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50 per volume.

Of these five new volumes in the Loeb Classical Library the first is notable for the brilliance of its translation. The Library is always competent in this respect, and not a few of its volumes have supplied, opposite the Latin or the Greek originals, English texts of grace and distinction. But in Mr. Wright the editors have made use of a translator who would be rare in any age, let alone in any library such as this. Eighteen letters of St. Jerome, in themselves powerful pieces of writing, become in Mr. Wright's hands as much alive as if they had been written yesterday—provided, of course, that yesterday is understood to be fifteen hundred years ago.

Beyond the Street. By Edgar Calmer. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

It may be symptomatic of the present anarchy of bourgeois society, of the absence of any integrating system of beliefs, that so many novelists, looking for a common denominator to which to reduce a variety of characters, choose the business organization, the public institution, or the accidentally assembled group as a background. We have had the novel dealing with the office, the hospital, the luxury liner, the commutation train, and now, in Mr. Calmer's work, the public high school. Too often, however, the novelist forgets that in order to give point to these studies in individual diversity it is necessary first to show the force of some common ideal, the institutional thought coloring the personal make-up, the group psychology changing individual

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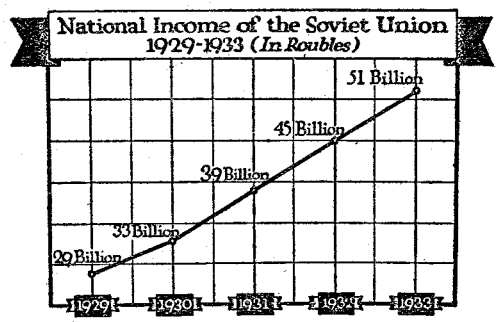

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STUART CHASE will review
"Our Master's Voice: Advertising" by James Rorty

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MARY OF SCOTLAND. Alvin Theater. Helen Hayes and Philip Merivale give fine performances in Maxwell Anderson's play. An outstanding dramatic hit but one which left me a little cold.

MEN IN WHITE. Broadhurst Theater. Fine teamwork on the part of the members of the Group Theater helps to make this play about a young doctor one of the things which must not be missed.

IOLANTHE. Majestic Theater. This week's offering of a good company presenting Gilbert and Sullivan repertory.

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THE SHINING HOUR. Booth Theater. What happens to a quiet English family when love puts in an unexpected appearance. Delightful comedy and the best of the recent offerings.

Drama

What Is Melodrama?

LAST week I discussed the Theater Union's new production, "Stevedore," as an effective melodrama. Several readers have protested on the ground that "melodrama" is a derogatory term, that it suggests a sort of empty, old-fashioned trickery, that it is, in sum, no suitable word to use in connection with so earnest a play. Melodrama, they add, usually adopts a conventional attitude toward a conventional theme. Far from being revolutionary in its tendency, it falls in with popular prejudices and, in part at least, depends for the pleasure it gives upon the fact that it does afford simple-minded support to the emotional simplifications habitual to its audience.

Doubtless the word is often loosely used with all these connotations, but at the risk of seeming pedantic I should like to rescue it from abuse as a term of vague derogation and assign to it the specific meaning which it properly has. As all who are familiar with theatrical history know, it originally meant exactly what the syllables suggest—a drama accompanied by melodies; and the excited thumping which used in our childhood to herald the entrance of the villain and the "soft music" which used to accompany the scenes of sentiment were last vestiges of what had formerly been an important element in a particular kind of entertainment. But the original "melodramas" were invented for performance in large London theaters which were prevented by the monopolistic system of licenses from performing any plays in the standard repertory. Partly because they were hastily written for immediate consumption and partly because the auditoriums were too large to permit the effective use of much dialogue, the stress was upon spectacle and action, upon things seen rather than upon words heard. Accordingly when melodramas, properly so called, disappeared along with the situation which had called them into being, the name persisted to identify any play in which the action was conspicuously more important than the dialogue, and "melodramatic" is still properly used to indicate that the drama so labeled is one which depends for its effect chiefly upon an externalized conflict, one in which the triumph or defeat of the protagonist is recounted in visual terms—as when the villain falls over the cliff or the hero arrives in time to loosen the bonds which hold his beloved in the path of the on-rushing train.

It makes no difference what moral or political force is supposed to be triumphing. The hero may represent democracy, the spirit of the marines, or clean living in the out-of-doors. The conflict may nominally be the conflict between Arianism and the Athanasian creed in the fourth century. But if, in the latter case, the interest of the play really depends upon the scene in which the followers of Athanasius literally shove an Arian bishop off the episcopal seat, then it is a melodrama, even though the excuse for it happens to be a highly intellectual controversy. Hence the fact that "Stevedore" is revolutionary in tendency and concerned with the class struggle is irrelevant so far as the classification of the play as melodrama is concerned. It has to come in the end to a last-minute arrival of white workers, who might, if we were not told different, just as well

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be marines, but that is because physical conflicts all look alike and a red cracking a fascist over the head looks exactly like a fascist cracking a red over the head.

Nor do I see any reason why the admirers of "Stevedore" should object to having it called a melodrama. Its purpose is obviously to stir the passions, and melodrama is the best theatrical method of doing that yet invented. Propagandists commonly pretend that they want "to make people think." I doubt if they really do and I am quite sure that few plays recently written with that avowed purpose have done anything of the sort. But if it is hard for a play to make the spectator think, it is relatively easy for it to make him fighting mad—especially if it happens to be, like "Stevedore," a good melodrama.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The Dance

"Cotillion": "Union Pacific"

THE Monte Carlo Ballet Russe has done one notable service in allowing Americans to get a view, however belated, of a repertory that made the ballet the most lively single influence in the arts of painting, music, and dancing from 1909 for twenty years. It is a very difficult thing to revive a ballet after its initial seasons. Usually the dancing was designed for a specific cast. In the case of the Fokine ballets, like "Prince Igor," "Les Sylphides," and "Carnaval," the choreography has taken on an almost legendary classicism. The first of the modern Russian ballets, twenty years ago, framed Pavlova, Nijinsky, and Karsavina for the first time and forever. Now, performed against dimmed décor by lesser technicians and, what is more serious, by *different* dancers, whose interpretations must perforce be a pastiche of the heroic original, the effect cannot avoid the dubious.

Georges Balanchine's and André Derain's "Competition" was rightly the outstanding success of the first visit of the Monte Carlo Ballet, as "Cotillion" was the success of its second. "Cotillion" is a fascinating theatrical experience unlike any ballet composed in our day. For its subject matter is not fable but atmosphere, the tragic atmosphere of an influential and ridiculous segment of international society. In a bare rented hall with great marbled walls, bordered with crimson and gilt loges, many dancers perform the familiar rituals of a ball. In bitter costumes recalling Boldini and parties of adolescents just before the war, strangely reminiscent ceremonies are executed with the tired precision of nervous, anguished gaiety. Balanchine the musician is the equivalent of Balanchine the ballet-master. His variations spring equally from Euclid and the heart. The freshness of his invention, the purely lyric, continuously surprising logic of his developing ideas merely give further testimony to his inexhaustible genius. Here, for the first time, ballet is used not to tell a story but to inscribe a cumulative mood as tender, mysterious, and intense as a song. Toumanova, her black hair decked with a blue bow, executed her febrile fouettés with such dissembling ease that pure technique was felt to be as lovely as pure joy, at least when set in the final spiral, sweeping, shattering climax of a Balanchine ball.

The production of "Union Pacific," with scenario by Archibald MacLeish, music of N. Nabokoff, and choreography by Massine, was admirable from one point of view. It marked the interest of an able poet in a medium which can prove as fruitful to poets as it has been to painters and composers. There could have been no better poet chosen to imagine an American subject heroically or dramatically. The subject itself, the construction of the first transcontinental railroad, had considerable potential motive magnificence, more perhaps from a cinematic than a choreographic point of view. Nevertheless, the idea of an Irish gang pushing west and a Chinese gang pushing east against time and in spite of obstacles, meeting at a point in Utah, had scale worthy of the Music Hall and a mass spectacle of 500 dancers. As produced by the Monte Carlo Ballet, "Union Pacific" was of importance neither from a scenic, musical, nor dramatic angle. Albert Johnson's infantile decoration may have been determined by the atmosphere of the dances, but only in the blue-print drop of Utah crossed by a railroad track was there any real inkling of the essence of the subject. The costumes by Irene Sharaff were lovely and often right, although so badly lighted that their real flare and bravura could scarcely be appreciated. A discussion of Nabokoff's music is not relevant here. The American thematic material was adequately handled, with perhaps too much use of one tune, and a terrible forcing of the brasses to build up accents of noise. What Jerome Kern would have done with the same material, it is not hard to imagine, would have been more touching, less schooled in the tradition of Rimsky-Korsakov.

Only bewilderment and exasperation can come from Massine's uncreative choreography. Tacitly abandoning the heroism of the subject, for whatever good or bad reason, from the very first moment, his conception of an American ballet was trifling and confused. Opening with a pointless solo, as tactless in style as it was vapid in invention, it put that fine young dancer Andrei Eglevsky to extreme embarrassment. The Irish crew, curiously Russian in red boots, carried in girls representing ties and rails. This vulgar literalism on a big scale if photographed on a Warner Brothers lot would have merited the applause it received. But here it was an active pun, a mixture of modes involving humans forced into a rigidity they could not hold, in an unworthy charade which was the height of choreographic bad manners.

Any idea of two gangs, despite all, forcing their inevitable way across the opening empire of our West was destroyed by an interminable interlude lasting for more than half the ballet, staged in a tent where Massine arranged a series of divertissements. Why he had to use the grammar of classical ballet here is a mystery: why toes, why pas de deux, why pirouettes? This kind of abuse of a great vocabulary is the reason so many people think ballet is played out. But granting that he wished to bring down the level of the dancing to a Chauve Souris basis, some sense of the style of frontier brashness, even a Mae West hip-fling or a tawdry, roving, gambling vitality, could have redeemed the poverty of his invention. Massine himself stopped the show in a barman's dance. Four or five initial snake-hips Harlem belly bends intoxicated the audience with their familiarity, but any even modern Americanism was thrown over to give way to a bright little number, ending with a sure-fire pirouette and held pose. Enough complaints: it was neither vulgar, nor consistent, nor stylish, nor new; it had no idea, no climax, but only a finale.

One single question arises. Is local American material, a subject rooted to a geographical point, in historic time, feasible for ballet? Dancing is lyric in essence. Local color, when not purely decorative, a pageant, is only dramatic when carefully studied to revive the nostalgia of past time. Otherwise why use any particular time? Essential American material, that is, American pacing, character, carriage, is splendid stuff for dancing. Even using Russians, who had no idea of what they were supposed to represent, "Union Pacific" could have become a more impressive vehicle by throwing away the few links with anecdote and busying itself entirely with mass formations: a real design of human labor. Humor, anecdote, grimace, and surprise are the cheap tricks on which a rueful artist relies to conceal the poorness of his imagination.

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